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[TOVEY'S CAPTIVE.]

FICKLE FORTUNE.

By the Author of "Maurice Durant," etc.

CHAPTER LVIII.

I have scented all
Wherein I should your great deserts repay.

Shakespeare.

THE task Mr. Tovey and his partner had undertaken was not a very light one. It had its responsibilities, and Joe Willy was fully sensible of them. It is not every wind that brings young gentlemen willing to pay liberally in good Bank of England notes for the safe keeping of their brothers, and the dock man was determined to keep a very careful look out that his valuable lodger did not elude his grasp. Consequently whenever he had a spare moment—and he managed to snatch several from his day's work—he trod up the stairs very carefully and quietly, and on tiptoe stole a glance at the comfortable bed upon which Hugh Darrell—for we may as well give him his right name now—was lying.

The old lady, not forgetful of her promise to the liberal, kind-spoken young gentleman, really spent most of her time and devoted her principal energies to the nursing of the invalid, so that, taking into consideration the extraordinary attention on the part of the doctor—extracted by a double fee—the daily supply of jellies, grapes, and such like luxuries, delivered punctually at ten o'clock, it was not to be marvelled at that the strong, huge-limbed Hugh gained strength sufficiently to enable him to go through the usual convalescent performance—ask questions.

First he raised himself upon one elbow, next looked round the room with that slow, half-dreamy look one wears at such a moment of reawakening, and then, fixing his deep brown eyes upon the lady, said, with an evident effort at recalling late events:

"How long have I been lying here?"

"Oh, not very long, sir," replied the lady, with a slight courtesy, thinking it best, as her kind generally do, to answer an invalid's question with an evasion.

"Not very long," he repeated, sinking back. "It seems ages."

"Do it, sir, now? Well, I daresay it do seem long to be lying quiet and still like. Can I get you anything, sir?"

"No," he said, in that grave, pure-bred voice that had gone far to corroborate his "brother's" story in the old lady's opinion. "No, I thank you, excepting it be a little water."

"I mustn't give you that, the doctor's forbid it; but here are some grapes that will quench your thirst quite as well, sir," and she held him a few grapes upon a plate.

He raised his eyes and looked at them rather inquiringly.

"Grapes!" he said. "Grapes must be half-a-crown a pound. I am afraid you have been hastening my recovery at some expense," and his handsome face overshadowed.

"No—that is—I mean—" stammered the old lady, who had been severely instructed to hold her tongue and answer no questions. "I mean that Joe and Tovey will see to all that."

"Joe and Tovey," repeated Hugh, looking puzzled. "May I ask where I am? Wherever I am I am in kind, Christian hands, I know, for which I am grateful, ay, and have been even while I have been unable to say so."

There was a touching dignity with which he laid his hand, lithe and strong still, but rather white and thin, upon the old lady's wrinkled one.

"Don't you go to speak of it, sir; don't, if you please," she replied, laconically. "We've done no more than we should—leastways, more than we were told."

"Told," he repeated, looking puzzled again. "Who told you?"

What muddle the old lady would have been involved in is not to be known, for at that moment Joe Willy looked in during one of his spare moments, and hearing the invalid's voice stepped into the room and took off his cap.

"Good-morning, sir. I hope I see you better."

"I am much better," said Hugh. "Thanks to the careful nursing I have received from this good soul, and, maybe, others. I was just asking her where I was, and to whom I am indebted for all

this," and, with a look of gratitude and grave bewilderment, he glanced at the bottles of wine, plates of cake, jellies, fruit, etc.

"This is the docks, sir," replied Mr. Willy, glibly, for he had been preparing for the scene and had got his part well out and dried, "the docks, sir, where the 'Solavonia' came in."

"Ay, I remember," said Hugh, sadly. "There were no lives lost, some one told me?"

"No, sir, not a single one, thanks to you and a few other brave uns. All hands saved, men, women, and children."

"Thank Heaven," murmured Hugh, quietly.

"Amen," responded Mr. Willy, devoutly.

"And this is the docks?" said Hugh, looking round curiously. "Please tell me, if you will. I am rather weak, still, I find, and—"

"Talking comes rather difficult. Just so," put in Mr. Willy. "Yes, sir, this is the docks. This is my mate Tovey's cottage, inside the gates. This is Mrs. Tovey. I'm Joe Willy, checking clerk."

Hugh nodded with grave impatience.

"We found you quite knocked up aboard the 'Solavonia.' There was a good deal of fuss going on, and seein' as you were what might be termed ends-on like, my mate Tovey and me just brought you in here to rest and get round a bit. And you did, only for a bit, though. You'd been playin' the brick, sir, if I may make so bold as to say so, for rather a longish spell, and half short rations for a fortnight is calculated to take the backbone out of a man. You was completely knocked up."

Mr. Willy, partly to gain time, partly to give full force to his description, divided and emphasised the word and shook his head.

"You just come to enough to ask us to keep the newspaper men away from you, and then gave in. We did as we should like to be done by—we brought you up here, and when the newspaper chaps came dodgin' round, sayin' as they wanted the hero o' the 'Solavonia,' as had starved himself for the sake of the women and children, me and Tovey looked innocent and said that you'd gone away, drawn your money and left the docks."

"Thanks, thanks," murmured Hugh, fervently, with a sigh of relief.

He would rather have starved outright than be fussed over and paraphrased in the daily papers, ticketed for life as the "hero of the Solavonia."

"Don't mention it, sir, don't mention it," resumed Mr. Wily, with praiseworthy benevolence. "As I was a-sayin', we brought you up here and sent for a doctor. He said as you were suffering from an attack of—of—Do you happen to remember, Mrs. Tovey, what he did say it was the gentleman had?"

Mrs. Tovey shook her head regretfully but decisively.

"Well, it was a word with five or six syllables and ended with a-u, I know, brought on, he said, by the privation and all that. You was to be kept very quiet, not allowed to get up. He laid particular stress upon that, mind, sir. You was not to be allowed to get up even when you wanted to—not till you were quite strong. That's right, ain't it, Mrs. Tovey?"

"Yes, he did, sir, he did indeed," assented the old lady.

"And," continued Mr. Wily, "you was to have everything as was very nourishing and strengthenin', such as—casting his eyes round the various delicacies upon the table and scanning them with slow unobtrusive—such as sherry wine with water, grapes, rice cake, chicken and ham, beef tea, jellies and broth."

Hugh, with a troubled look, stopped him.

"My good fellow, I am very grateful, more grateful than I can possibly tell you, but all these cost money. You must not think I am a rich man; I am only a plain miller, and quite unable to pay for all these luxuries," and he raised himself upon his elbow with a groan of vexation.

"There you are, you see, sir. This is just what I expected. Here you are a-bettin' yourself about these 'ere gimcracks and a-undin' all the good as they have done. This is what I told the doctor, when he says to me, quite sover's like: 'Don't you let him get excited. He must be kept quiet or I won't answer for it.' For goodness' sake, sir, if you don't want to get me into trouble lay down again."

This appeal had the desired effect. Hugh dropped upon the pillow again with a sigh and said:

"I am an honest man and do not want to reward your noble kindness by deceit. I tell you I am unable to pay for all these things. I haven't a shilling in the world."

Mr. Wily smiled behind his hand and winked at Mrs. Tovey with supreme enjoyment. It was rich for this man, for whose safe sleeping he was being paid at the rate of twenty pounds a week, to be mourning over his inability to pay his doctor's bill.

"Never you mind that, sir, we didn't do it for your money," which was very true, considering it was the strange young gentleman's. "We have got hearts, sir, I should hope, and we've done as we should hope to be done by."

Hugh stirred uneasily.

"All this but adds to your kindness, friend, and my obligation. The fact still remains that I am a penniless man and that grapes are half-a-crown a pound."

"Penniless, sir; what's the odds?" rejoined Mr. Wily, getting rather alarmed, for there was a latent air of decision that gave him a hint of the firm, stern will of his charge. "What's the odds, as I say to Tovey, whether the gentleman has got the drink or not? He'll get well soon enough, and then what few pounds there is owin' he can work off here in the docks."

Hugh looked up eagerly, caught by this artful speech exactly as Mr. Wily had intended he should be.

"Work," he said. "Can you give me any work here in the docks for a little while, so that I can pay for all this?"

"Of course I can," said Mr. Wily.

"Then I will get up to-morrow and—"

"Go to bed again fifty per cent worse nor before!" interrupted Mr. Wily. "Don't you go to do no such thing, sir; lay by for a few days longer as the doctor says, and then we'll find you some work here—ladin' and so on."

"Well, if you will have it so," said Hugh, faintly, for the exertion of speaking and thinking had told on him. "But I must get up directly I feel able."

"Right you are, sir," rejoined Mr. Wily. "And here comes the doctor. Good-morning, sir; the gentleman's better this morning. I have been telling him what you said, and he's promised to lay by a bit."

And with a touch of the hat to the business-like physician Mr. Wily, sufficiently delighted with the success of his manoeuvre, stole down the stairs.

In a few days Hugh was sufficiently recovered to journey downstairs, and in yet another few days to stride into the dockyard and lend Mr. Tovey a hand in his daily labours.

Once out in the open air he seemed to regain his old strength of limb and erect courage as if by magic,

and appeared to take a stern sort of delight in the hard manual labour which he shared.

In short, the great physical strength and dignified taciturnity attracted the dock people as it had done the men in the wilds of Africa, and his tanned, handsome face and lithe, graceful figure soon became a by-word with them.

Wherever there was a heavier share of work than usual there Laurence—as he was of course called—was to be found, lending his long arms and strong, stalwart shoulders with a silent, grave readiness that, while it attracted and evoked his fellow-labourers' admiration, commanded their respect.

Mr. Wily grew alarmed; his invalid's strength came back to him so magically that he felt it would soon be a very difficult task to keep him within bounds of the docks.

"I never see such a chap," he remarked to Mr. Tovey, in an undertone, as they stood together watching Hugh hoist an unusual load into the crane.

"He's a gentleman any one can see by the way he carries himself. But did you ever see any one with such a pair of legs and arms before? After his illness too. It's wonderful, that's what it is—wonderful. 'Pon my soul, Tovey, I didn't give the gentry credit for so much pluck."

"Ah, it's all blood, blood, Joe—all blood," said Mr. Tovey, sentimentally. "High breeding" is the same in a man as it is in a race 'oss. But I'm thinking as he'll soon have worked off the debt you put him down at. What'll you do then?"

Mr. Wily shook his head.

"That's just what I'm asking myself. He won't have cleared it off for a day or two, but it wants nigh upon a week to the time the young gentleman arranged for. I heard from him last night, and he says we are not to let him leave the docks on no account."

"Ah, it's all very well to talk," said Mr. Tovey, "but if he said as he wanted to go who'd stop him I should like to know?"

"Hush! here he comes. Oh, he's going to the gate now."

And Mr. Wily, with a well-feigned air of easy indifference, strolled off to intercept Hugh, who, wiping his forehead, was striding towards the dock entrance.

"Good-evening, sir," said Mr. Wily.

Hugh nodded with grave courtesy.

"Good-evening," he said.

"Very warm," said Mr. Wily, sitting down beside him. "I'm afraid as you are putting it on a little too hard, sir, considering all things. You'll knock yourself up again if you don't take care."

"That reminds me," replied Hugh, taking no notice of the caution, and thrusting his hand into his pocket. "Here are fifteen shillings. I forgot to give them to you this morning. How much am I in your debt now? I mean for actual money, spent—for kindness I shall always be your debtor."

And he smiled gratefully.

"Don't you mention it, sir," said Mr. Wily, putting the fifteen shillings into his pocket, but very reluctantly. "You're welcome to all the kindness if there is any, and for the matter of that, so you are to the money, if so be as I could afford it."

"I believe it, my friend, you are a good fellow—but, come, I am anxious to be out of your debt, or as far as I can. How much does that leave?"

"A matter of a pound or two—leaving the doctor's bill out, sir; but there ain't no hurry."

Hugh raised his eyebrows.

"I think differently," he said, with a smile.

Wily looked at the gate.

"You mustn't think of going out, sir?"

Hugh rose from his seat with an easy grace and laughing his short, grim laugh for the first time in Mr. Wily's ears said:

"Come, my friend, you are rather distrustful! You need not fear my running away till we have settled. There, make your mind easy. I give you my word I shall not pass those gates—much as I desire to—until I have paid every penny your charity has cost you."

And with a kindly pat on the shoulder he walked away with the much-relieved Wily, who took the opportunity as he passed his partner of whispering:

"All right, Tovey, he's giv' his word."

In the evening, after the usual cup of tea, Hugh looked up and asked for a sheet of note paper, and pen and ink.

Joe, with seeming celerity, got them and placed them before him, and Hugh wrote a letter; not a long one, but one that cost him some thought, for once or twice he looked up from the paper and sighed.

It was done at last, however, and, enclosing it in the envelope, he directed it, saying to old Mrs. Tovey as he did so:

"It is a long while since I have used pen and paper—I have almost forgotten how to write."

"A letter," said Joe, "want it posted, sir? I'm going out directly and 'll take it if you like."

"Thanks," said Hugh, and he gave it him, resuming his old thoughtful attitude immediately.

Joe Wily got up, reached his cap from its peg behind the door, and with a wink to the old gentleman left the house.

At the gate he stopped to look at the direction on the envelope, and at that moment was startled by a slight tap at the small door.

Hastily dropping the note into his pocket, he opened it and saw Mr. John Stamford, who was carefully wrapped up about the lower part of his face in a slight silken shawl, which together with his blue spectacles so hid his features that had it not been for his figure Mr. Wily would not have recognized him.

"Hullo, sir!" he exclaimed, but a warning gesture of the secretary's stopped him.

"Hush!" said he, looking round carefully. "Is he anywhere near?"

"No, sir; inside the cottage," replied Joe, and he stepped through the gate. "All right, sir, he's inside quite comfortable."

"And well?" asked the secretary, eagerly.

"Well—quite well," replied Mr. Wily. "I never see any one pick up so soon. Why, he's as strong as a lion."

A faint tinge almost of pride flushed the young gentleman's brow, but he remained silent for a moment, then said:

"And you have kept the secret?"

"Yes, sir, quite so," said Mr. Wily. "My plan acted first rate, and he's working away every day—almost too hard, as I tell him—to pay for the doctor and the delicacies he thinks he owes me for."

And Joe chuckled.

The secretary nodded.

"Thank you, thank you; I shall not trouble you much longer, only a few days."

"All right, sir, I've got his word of honour that he won't pass the gates till we're squared up, and I know he'll keep it."

"To the death!" exclaimed the secretary, with a toss of his head.

"It's lucky I see you, sir, just now, for he's wrote a letter to-night and I've got it now to post."

"A letter?" said the young gentleman. "Let me see it," and he took it eagerly, but checking himself as he commenced to read the direction and dropping it into his pocket. "And he is well, you say. Does the doctor see him still?"

"Oh, no, sir, he gave him up three days ago. Said as he was all right if he didn't have too much exertion."

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed the secretary. Then hearing footsteps he drew his shawl closer over his face and thrusting something crisp into Mr. Wily's hand glided away.

Joe Wily, with a chuckle, closed the gate, and the secretary, keeping well in the shadow, gained the next lamp.

Then he took out Hugh Darrell's letter and read, with a start, the direction.

"Sir Harry Darrell,

"The Dale,

"—shire."

"Ah," he exclaimed, "here is direct proof. Oh, Hugh, dear Hugh, poor Hugh!"

And kissing the letter twice with a passionate earnestness he replaced it in his pocket, balled a cab and was soon far away.

CHAPTER LIX.

Tremble, thou wretch,
Then hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipp'd of justice. —Shakespeare.

Like his secretary Reginald Dartmouth had not been idle.

Time was pressing on, his well-laid plans must be brought to a consummation, and he was on the alert.

First and foremost he had to arrange for the count's journey.

That matter cost him but little thought.

Forgery came easy to Reginald Dartmouth, and with all the materials to his hand he speedily concocted a spurious despatch purporting to come from one of the leaders of the conspiracy in Italy demanding the count's attendance in Rome, and having sent it was now seated in his private room coolly and quietly waiting the result.

He had not to wait long.

"The Count Vittarelli!" announced his new valet, and Reginald Dartmouth rose to meet him.

The count was quietly triumphant and evidently running over with his news.

Reginald Dartmouth, watching him as the spider does the fly that is safely ensnared in his woven snare, received him with his usual languid cordiality and asked after the countess.

"Lucille is well," replied the count, "and desires me to bring you all loving greetings. But, Dartmouth, I have come to surprise you," and his sharp eyes trembled.

Reginald Dartmouth suppressed the mocking glitter of his deep eyes, and said:

"Good tidings, I hope, my dear count—may, I see, for your face is an index of your news. Come," he added, with mock enthusiasm, "let me share your joy."

"What think you?" exclaimed the count, waving the despatch. "Oh, Santa Maria, how fickle fortune is! The other day I was announcing Rome lost, to-day I am mad with the intelligence of her being nearly won."

Reginald grasped his hand with fulgent delight. "What?" he said. "Have we won, my dear count? Is it possible?"

"Ay, it is, it is," said the count, his eyes running over with tears of joy. "Rome is nearly ours—at least so says this despatch, which comes from Massini!"

"Massini!" echoed Reginald Dartmouth, in a tone of excitement, "then it cannot be false. Tell me, my dear count," he exclaimed, "tell me all!"

"Read for yourself," replied the delighted Italian, and he pressed the forged despatch into the outstretched hand of his manufacturer.

Reginald Dartmouth read with an assumption of eagerness and emotion that would have deceived the evil one.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, suddenly, "they call you to Rome! You will go?"

"Of course, at once!" responded the Italian. Reginald Dartmouth read on:

"They enjoin you to secrecy—even in regard to the society here in England and Lucille."

"Which society I shall maintain!" said the count, proudly. "Lucille is too faithful and dutiful to hesitate in obeying my commands, though I bid her accompany me to Rome and withhold the whereabouts."

Again Reginald Dartmouth suppressed the mocking glitter.

"Ay," he said, "she is, dear Lucille. And must I lose her? Oh, count, what will the separation cost me?"

"But it will not be for long," said the count. "You will come over after us. We cannot do without you. Nay, my dear Dartmouth, we have to recompense you for all your labours in our cause."

The tone with which the Italian said this showed that he already in fancy wielded the sceptre of Italian power, and the listener laughed in his heart with pitiless scorn at his dupe's credulity.

"Yes," he said, "you must come—and soon, Dartmouth. We will marry you to Lucille. We will give you titles and wealth—nay, more, you shall join us in ruling the people you have helped to freedom."

Reginald Dartmouth grasped his hand with overwhelming gratitude.

"My dear count, think not of me but of yourself and Lucille. I am rewarded sufficiently for my poor services by the priceless boon of her love. When do you start?"

"In four days," said the count.

"So soon?" said Reginald Dartmouth.

"Yes. The despatch says at once," said the count. "And, Dartmouth, when can you manage to let me have the money you promised?"

"The morning you start," said Reginald Dartmouth, promptly. "I will call at the house with it when I see you off. How will you have it? Notes or gold?"

"Gold, gold," said the count. "Gold is best. Ah! I must not linger. Much is to be done before we start."

And, with another hearty shake of the hand, the deceived Italian hurried away.

A wicked smile played over the fowler's face and he lounged to the open door with his hand in his pocket to see his victim go, loth to lose the merciless delight the evidence of his credulity gave him.

Then he closed the door, and with a thought-marked brow he muttered:

"There is indeed much to do. Three days only. Well, well, the overtune has nearly finished, now for the drama. First to Lucille. Poor girl, it cuts me to the heart to deceive her—but all is fair in love or war, and I know how slender the thread is by which I hold her."

Then he drew his gilded writing-table toward him and penned a short note.

"MY DEAREST LUCILLE.—The moon will be full on the third night from this.—Yours till death, REGINALD DARTMOUTH."

"There, she cannot mistake that," he muttered.

And calling his new valet he sent him off with it. Now all was arranged save one thing.

That, the darkest and basest deed of all, could not be done save in the darkness and secrecy of night.

When that came the man who had not shrunk from murder and forgery sat with white face and shaking hands glancing fearfully round the padded walls of the sound-tight room and almost shuddering at the shadow of his own evil self thrown by the shaded lamp.

All was ready, he repeated to himself over and

over again. This thing alone remained to be done. Why did he shrink? Did he fear the consequences? Did he know them? Yes, too surely. Treason was to be followed by death!

"Bah!" he murmured, with a faint scornful laugh. "What have I to fear? Who is to recognize the hand that deals the blow? It is simple—simple as the alphabet. Here before me lies the list of the members of the society in Italy and England, so written that no expert in the world could trace the hand that wrote it. I have but to send this to the government at Rome and the bolt falls upon all of them, while I, safe and sound, can wait till all is blown over and then claim my reward!"

As he mused the cold perspiration poured off his face, and he started with a cry, for in his ears seemed to ring the words he had used with a chorus solemn and dirge-like:

"Treason, death! Treason, death!"

With a gigantic effort he threw up his hand and uttered a light laugh of bravado.

"Away, childish fears, away. Who heeds the gabble of a pack of geese? Death! who is to deal it? who is to know that I merit it? No, no, it is but a childish nursery legend! Let me be brave and go on my way to victory!"

So musing he sat himself down again, folded the paper containing the fatal names and enclosing it in an envelope looked for some wax wherewith to seal it.

There was none in his inkstand, none in his drawer.

With an impatient exclamation he stretched his hand towards the bell, but before it had rung he arrested it, and with a muttered "No, I will do it myself," rose from the chair and left the room.

No sooner had the door closed with its secret spring than a thin, snake-like head with a white face bruised and livid on one side protruded from behind the curtains and a viperish pair of eyes were fastened upon the desk.

Then with action as serpentine as look the spy darted at the package, quick as thought replaced it by another exactly its counterpart in outward appearance, and clutching the genuine one in his claw-like fingers glided behind the curtains again.

The eyes, hands, snake-like form, the bruised face, were those of Vignas, the discharged valet.

CHAPTER LX.

I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Shakespeare.

SIR CHARLES was so filled with satisfaction and so greatly relieved at seeing his way to a little open and above-board work towards unmasking and foiling his quondam friend Captain Dartmouth that with his old impetuosity he was for digging up the well there and then; that is to say five minutes after Rebecca had shown him the anonymous note which in curt and concise language bade them search there.

But from this injudicious precipitancy Rebecca saved him; and Sir Charles, still obedient and tractable, consented to wait until Mr. Reeves could be consulted and taken into confidence.

The following morning, that is to say the morning after the conversation which we have recorded some few chapters back, the baronet mounted his horse—now thoroughly rested and invigorated—and rode off to the next town, where Mr. Reeves had a residence.

Our readers will, we trust, not have forgotten him. He was a solicitor of the old school, a school that is unfortunately becoming somewhat unfashionable.

Lawyers now-a-days may possess not one whit less honour, but they are scarcely so loyal to the families whom they represent.

In the old times to possess a solicitor was to possess a friend.

A family lawyer was a family bulwark, henchman, and guardian. He was a recipient of the most sacred confidences, the adviser on matters that even stood outside the pale of purely legal ground.

No marriage was promoted or celebrated without his advice and help; no will made, lease granted, decisive step taken, legal or otherwise, without his dicta having been obtained.

Such a lawyer was Mr. Reeves, such a friend had he been to the Dale and its masters up to the death of Sir Harry.

Nay, though he scarcely owed the same true loyalty to the new master, Reginald Dartmouth, he would steadfastly have remained in the same character to him, but as we know Captain Dartmouth had no friend, no confidant, and could not regard the possibility of one with anything but aversion and dread.

So Mr. Reeves—though acting as the Dale solicitor as before—really did little for Reginald Dartmouth, and had seen nothing of him since the final settlement of Sir Harry's affairs.

He, it will be remembered, had closely questioned Captain Dartmouth concerning the last moments of Sir Harry, he it was who had opened and read the

will, and attended to the necessary forms and legalities.

In the discharge of these duties the keen-eyed old lawyer may have seen much to arouse his suspicions—or he may not. Either way he had remained as ever—silent and inscrutable.

To him Sir Charles now went.

He found him located in an old-fashioned, red-bricked house, substantial and aristocratic, quietly glad to see Sir Charles, careful in his inquiries as to Captain Dartmouth and Miss Goodman's health, and then calmly expectant of his visitor's business—for of course he was too much a man of the world and the law to imagine that the baronet had ridden over on a visit of politeness or pleasure.

Sir Charles opened the talk in his usual candid and frank way.

"Mr. Reeves, I have come over on business, but not altogether, for, believe me, it gives me pleasure to renew an acquaintance."

Mr. Reeves bowed and shifted his spectacles from his forehead.

"I shall be happy to do anything I can to serve you, Sir Charles," he said, quietly.

"Well," said Sir Charles, "I ought at once, before going farther, to inform you that it is Miss Goodman, my cousin, who needs your advice and assistance rather than myself."

"Miss Goodman," said Mr. Reeves; "I shall feel honoured by her confidence."

Sir Charles nodded.

"Candidly, Mr. Reeves," he continued, "I wish that she were here in my place, for I feel that I am the very last fellow qualified to open a delicate matter of this kind."

Mr. Reeves rose very quietly and closed the inner baid door, which until now had been ajar.

"We are—that is Miss Goodman is—placed in a very unfortunate situation. She has a difficulty with an individual, a matter of difference which is extremely serious and which must be settled."

Seeing Sir Charles pause, Mr. Reeves bowed and drew a slip of paper towards him, and, jotting down a heading "Miss Goodman versus—," said:

"Yes?"

Sir Charles wiped his forehead.

He was indeed an unpleasant task, made none the less unpleasant and difficult by the way in which the quiet old lawyer persistently refused to help him.

"Before I go any farther," he continued, "let me repeat my assurance that this difference is serious, very serious; at once I may tell you that it involves the question of a crime."

If he expected the old lawyer to start or show any other emotion at the word he was disappointed.

Mr. Reeves swiftly dotted a few words down and nodded again.

"Something has come to the knowledge of Miss Goodman that leads her to suspect—I might almost say conclude—that a great crime has been perpetrated and a great wrong wrought on innocent persons."

Mr. Reeves nodded again.

"Do I understand you that Miss Goodman has sufficient evidence to convict an individual of an offence within the criminal code?"

"Yes," said Sir Charles, "that is what I mean, I suppose, if I put it in legal phrase. Scarcely evidence, though, scarcely direct evidence, but a clue to direct evidence."

Mr. Reeves removed his spectacles, half closed his eyes, and said, as calmly as ever:

"My dear Sir Charles, this is a matter for the nearest magistrate."

Sir Charles shook his head.

"No," he said. "If we—that is Miss Goodman, were in possession of direct evidence it might be, but I said emphatically that it was the clue only."

"And you wish me to take up this clue and follow it out?" said Mr. Reeves.

"Yes," said Sir Charles.

Mr. Reeves looked grave.

"Sir Charles," he said, slowly, "such practice—such criminal business—is entirely out of my province, I have never touched matters of this sort, have never soiled my professional hand—you will pardon the expression—by undertaking a case of this description. My practice is peculiarly a civil one, and though for once I might feel disposed, in my anxiety to be of some service to Miss Goodman, to waive that objection, I fear I could not be of so much assistance as a solicitor practising in a criminal court and having at his elbow a staff of trained detectives."

Sir Charles nodded.

"Just so, Mr. Reeves; this objection I expected, and had little doubt of overcoming, but I regret to say that one still more formidable remains."

Mr. Reeves raised his eyes keenly for a moment, then lowered them again, listening as before.

"That one is—you have not asked me the name of the individual whom Miss Goodman suspects, Mr. Reeves."

The old lawyer smiled a dry smile.

"We do not ask for confidences, Sir Charles; we only receive them."

"Ay, ay," said Sir Charles. "Perhaps it is well that as yet I have not told you. First let me state that the person we suspect of criminal acts and wrong doing is a client of yours."

Mr. Reeves rose immediately.

"Sir Charles," he said, as the baronet, alarmed at the sudden change in his manner from calm courtesy to proud reserve, was about to speak, "Sir Charles, not another word, I beg. You should have told me this at the commencement of the interview. Surely you must be aware that my client would, on getting the slightest knowledge of your movements, come to me immediately, as his solicitor and legal adviser. How could you imagine that I could so betray a client's interests as to consent to advise his opponents or accusers? You must not say another word for your own sake, my dear sir, for I am bound in honour to use whatever information you may give me after this morning for the benefit of my client."

He evidently expected Sir Charles to rise and say "good-day," but the baronet, though he flushed rather hotly, remained quietly in his chair, and seemed waiting to speak.

When the old lawyer was silent he said:

"I am fully aware of all you say, Mr. Reeves—knew it to be as you state before I started this morning, but still I am here, you see, and still I ask your assistance in discovering and punishing—a crime. No, hear me out, please," he said, earnestly, as Mr. Reeves held up his hand again, with a warning shake of the head. "I foresaw all your objections and I still decided to come, for I believe, Mr. Reeves, that I can offer you an inducement to join our side—I say our side, for it will be a pitched battle, short and decisive—and help us."

The old lawyer coloured faintly.

"If you mean any pecuniary inducements, Sir Charles—" he said, coldly.

But Sir Charles stopped him with a smile and exclamation of impatience.

"I am not so entirely senseless as to imagine that I could bribe you to take any course whatsoever, Mr. Reeves," he said. "One gentleman does not come to ask a favour of another with a bank-note in his hand."

"I beg your pardon!" said the old man.

"And I in granting it beg yours for putting my case so badly," said Sir Charles. "The fact is, Mr. Reeves, I am the very last person to carry this thing out properly. But I have come with a plain, unvarnished case, and I will go on with it. I ask you to join us for no pecuniary reasons but for those of justice and loyalty. Let me put it before you in my blundering way. Supposing you have been—as of a surety you have—the legal adviser, counsellor, guide and friend of a good old house, noble in more than name ever since you have been able to act in those capacities."

"I follow you," said Mr. Reeves, reseating himself.

"That house, family, is bound up in yourself, is a part of your life; you know all its secrets, are more conversant with its history, past and present, than even its masters, and have grown to look upon its sons almost as your own."

"I follow you still," said Mr. Reeves, in a low voice, as Sir Charles paused to give his words effect.

"From father to son the house and estate go down, not by entail mark, but by will, an entail of affection and parental confidence; at last the estate rests in the hands of a fiery old man with one brave-hearted, noble-minded son. There exists no reason why the grand estates should not still go with the good old name as of yore, but suddenly in a fit of unreasonable temper father and son part—the latter is turned adrift, the inheritance falls—mark me, I don't say given!—falls into the hands of a man of another name, an individual whose interests lie apart from the old estates, whose life has been entirely separate from it and whose character is doubtful. I ask you where your loyalty lies?"

"With the owner of the estate," returned the old lawyer, gravely. "Be he a stranger or kin matters not. He to whom the estate goes has my loyalty."

"Ah," said Sir Charles, bending forward, "but not, surely not, if he who has it has grasped it from the hands of the rightful heir and holds it by foul play!"

The old lawyer's hands, which still concealed his face, shook visibly.

There was a moment's pause. Then in a very low voice he said:

"You are speaking now of—"

"The Dale and Reginald Dartmouth!" interrupted Sir Charles.

The old lawyer's hand dropped suddenly upon the table, and he turned his face, much moved but still kept in restraint.

"Sir Charles," he said, "I always held you to be Captain Dartmouth's friend."

"So I was until I had good reason to believe him a villain, and then—not being his solicitor—I called him enemy and prepared to fight with him for the heritage which he has stolen from Hugh Darrell."

That seemed the last word which broke the back of the old man's firmness.

At the old familiar, much-loved name he turned suddenly aside and groaned. Then before Sir Charles could follow up his advantage—or spoil it by attempting to do so—he touched the hand-bell and in a low voice said:

"I will accompany you, Sir Charles, to the Warren."

(To be continued.)

SADNESS.

THERE is a mysterious feeling that frequently passes a cloud over the spirit. It comes upon the soul in the busy bustle of life, in the social circle, in the calm and silent retreat of solitude. Its power is alike supreme over the weak and iron-hearted. At one time it is caused by a single thought across the mind. Again, a sound will be booming across the ocean of memory, and solemn as the death-knell, overshadowing all the bright hopes and sunny feelings of the heart.

Who can describe it, and who has not felt its bewildering influence? Still it is a delicious sort of sorrow, and like a cloud dimming the sunshine of the river, although casting a momentary shade of gloom, it enhances the beauty of returning brightness.

HOPE.

THERE are times when a darkness surrounds us,

And troubles seem endless and dire,

And misfortune, chaotic abounding,

That hope alone bids us aspire.

There are times when our life seems so dreary,

And this world seems cheerless and cold,

That hope, with a sweet, soothing solace,

Tells us, cheer up and be bold.

There are times when our friends may desert us,

The friends we have thought tried and true,

And the dearest of ties may be broken,

But hope never wavers from you.

We hope and we wait for to-morrow

To bring to us respite from pain;

We hope that for all of our losses

We'll be yet compensated with gain.

Faith's the first step of life's ladder,

Hope's second, and bids us aspire;

While Charity, topmost to Heaven,

Elevates mankind higher and higher.

We hope that the Lord's with us daily,

We hope that there's mercy in store,

And that there's a rest for the weary

We hope when life's journey is o'er.

T. J. S.

SCIENCE.

OZONE.—M. Boillot, on submitting pure oxygen and atmospheric oxygen alternately to the action of the electric current, has discovered that 53 cubic inches of pure oxygen yield but one-eighth of a grain of ozone, while the same amount of atmospheric oxygen gives a quarter of a grain. Oxygen mingled in the air is therefore in a condition more favourable for its transformation into ozone.

NEW FUEL.—Mr. L. Banks, of Hull, proposes a new manufacture of fuel. The invention relates to the combination of the following matters:—1. The refuse which accumulates round the mouths of coal-pits. 2. Small coal. 3. Turf, peat, or such like matter. 4. Mineral pitch. 5. Coal-tar. 6. The scum or refuse from cotton seed after obtaining oil-cake therefrom. The coal-tar and the mineral pitch are prepared by being mixed whilst hot, and after being boiled in the ordinary manner in equal proportions. The two are then run together; before use they are re-boiled and mixed with the other ingredients before named. The whole are then compressed together by steam-power or otherwise, and the composition is then ready for use.

SUGAR A TEST FOR POTABLE WATER.—From an article on "The Discrimination of Good Water and Wholesome Food" we find the following simple directions given for testing water, whether it is good and drinkable:—"Good water should be free from colour, unpleasant odour and taste, and should quickly afford a good lather with a small proportion of soap. If half a pint of water be placed in a perfectly clean, colourless glass-stoppered bottle, a few grains of the best white lump sugar added, and the bottle freely exposed to the daylight in the window of a warm room, the liquid should not become turbid, even after exposed for a week or ten days. If the water becomes turbid it is open to

grave suspicion of sewage contamination; but if it remain clear it is almost certainly safe. We owe to Heisch this simple, valuable, but hitherto strangely neglected test."

PRESERVING RAILROAD TIES.—A Dresden engineer proposes a method for increasing the durability of railroad ties, by which, he considers, they may be made to last four times as long as at present. The sleepers, of whatever kind of wood, are first allowed to dry for some time in air, then are artificially dried in a hot chamber. They are next introduced, while hot, into an impregnation apparatus containing heated coal tar, where they are impregnated thoroughly under pressure. Then they are coated with sifted sand or coal ashes and allowed to dry. Every fissure is carefully filled; the nails used in fixing the sleepers are first dipped in hot coal-tar, and any part of the work which may be exposed is carefully coated. The inventor farther states that wood thus prepared has been also used for house-building purposes, and with excellent results.

A NEW WRITING MACHINE.—A new writing machine being exhibited by Mr. Emmett Dewamore seems to be an invention which, if the difficulty of its high price can only be surmounted, will be almost as great a boon to printers as printing itself was to the world at large. At all events, its adoption will deprive that hostile humani generis, "the printer's reader," of all chance of throwing back upon the crabbed penmanship of the maddened author the responsibility of the travestie in which he has presented his pet incubations to a bewildered public. The writing machine is with its stand about the size of a small sewing machine, and consists of a keyboard with three rows of keys, each of which is marked with a letter or number and connected with a long wire hammer, similar in action to those of a pianoforte, but bearing at the striking end, instead of the usual hard covered leather hammer, the metal die bearing the same letter or figure as that on the key. These hammers are ranged in a circle, so disposed that each hammer when thrown up by the action of its key strikes upon the same spot on a wooden cylinder, round which is rolled the paper to be written upon. Underneath this paper is a piece of ordinary carbonized paper, so that when the die on the hammer strikes upon it the white paper is at once marked with whatever letter or figure may be upon the die. As the key which has been struck rises on being relieved from the pressure upon it its action loosens a catch by which the wooden cylinder has been detained in its place, and the cylinder, acted upon by a coiled spring at one end, moves on a small space, so as to expose a fresh surface for the impact of the next die, which on its key being struck rises as before and marks the paper with a fresh letter or figure immediately following the first. In this way each word is spelled, the striking of a light wooden bar which runs along the front of the keyboard sufficing at the end of each word to move the cylinder forward without making any mark upon the paper, thus forming the spaces between the words. There are, of course, keys carrying the various notes of interrogation, etc., and it will readily be seen that by this arrangement a sentence may be printed off even much more rapidly than it can be written, each letter requiring, instead of the complicated, though unconscious, process of formation by a pen or pencil only the single rap with the finger upon the key. The only difficulty in the way—besides the slight initial difficulty of learning the keyboard by heart and practising the fingers to drop rapidly upon the desired letter—is that of finishing entirely with each letter before touching the key which is to print the next. As it is the machine can be worked easily up to from 60 to 80 words per minute, and with less fatigue to the operator than in writing in the ordinary way 25 to 30 words a minute. By the use of tissue paper and additional carbonized leaves eight or ten facsimiles can be printed simultaneously without any extra trouble. It is a most ingenious machine, and very simple in construction.

THE "EGYPT."—The splendid steamship "Egypt," of the National line, recently arrived at New York from Liverpool, making the passage from Queenstown in ten days, and bringing the largest number of passengers (we are told on excellent authority) that were ever brought to that port by one vessel. The steerage numbered one thousand seven hundred and six; in the saloon were fifty-eight passengers, and these, with the officers and large crew of the ship, made up a living freight of nearly two thousand persons—enough to form a fair-sized western city. The "Egypt" is one of the finest, largest, and best-appointed vessels that ply between New York and Liverpool. She measures 450 ft. from stem to stern, and is proportionately wide. It is a sight worth beholding when the "flush" deck is unoccupied, to stand at one end of this ship and get a clear view to the other. She is in fact a floating city.



[HAVING A TALK.]

EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.

Shakespeare.

EVERYBODY knew Godfrey Schuyler, and everybody liked him, and even now, as I, Ettie Armstrong, the village schoolmistress, write of him, with the echo of his marriage bells ringing in my ears, I feel again the warm kiss from his full, red, boyish lips, just as I used to feel it often during that one summer when he was my pupil in the old red schoolhouse, and kept us constantly stirred up with his love of fun and frolic.

How many flowers and berries and grapes and apples he brought me, and how his handsome, saucy eyes would laugh up into mine when I tried to reprove him.

Oh, Godfrey, Godfrey, you were very dear to me once—ay, are very dear still, and when I saw you go by to your bridal with the great happiness shining in your face I prayed Heaven to bless you as you deserved, and so did many another one to whom you have been like the very brightness of the morning.

An intolerable tease, Godfrey was something of a terror to his eldest sister Julia, whose imperious and sometimes insolent manners he mimicked and ridiculed, while to Alice Creighton, who he knew had been selected for his wife, he was a perpetual source of joy and annoyance both—joy when he treated her with that tenderness and gentleness so natural to him in his intercourse with girls, and annoyance when even with his arm around her waist he mimicked her affected ways and her constant allusions to "when I was abroad."

In stature Godfrey was tall, with a graceful, willowy form, a bright though rather dark complexion, soft, laughing blue eyes, with a world of mischief in them, and rich brown hair which clustered in curls about his forehead, and which he parted in the middle until his sister Julia, who did not like it, called him a prig and an ape, while Alice, who did like it, said it was "pretty, and just as the young noblemen wore their hair when she was abroad."

That was enough for Godfrey. If Alice Creighton liked it because she saw it abroad he surely would not follow that fashion, so henceforth his curly locks were parted on the side very near to his left ear, and a black ribbon bound two or three times around his head to keep his refractory hair in its place.

"If ever he went abroad he hoped he should not make a fool of himself by sniffing at his own country

and swallowing everything foreign, from French frogs and snails to the Pope's great toe!" he said, and when subsequently he did go abroad he bristled all over with nationality, and wore his country outside as plainly as if he had had it placarded on his back.

Nothing was quite equal to England in his estimation, and particularly was he averse to the girls whom he met, and in his first letter to his sisters and Alice he told them they were beauties compared with foreign girls; "even if Alice's nose was a pug and Jule's forehead so low that it took a microscope to find it, and Em's ankles no bigger than a pair of knitting-needles."

But when he came upon Edith Lyle, in her simple white wrapper, with the knot of blue ribbon in her golden brown hair, and her perfectly transparent complexion, he acknowledged to himself that in all his travels at home and abroad he had never seen a woman more beautiful, and he took off his hat and stood uncovered before her as readily as if she had been the queen.

That she was only Edith Lyle, his aunt's companion, instead of the high-born lady he had at first supposed her to be, made no difference with him. She was a woman, a girl; and as he reached the little hill beyond where she was sitting he turned to look at her again, and said:

"By George, father, isn't she a beauty?"

Mr. Schuyler knew to whom his son referred, and answered, in his usual grave, quiet way:

"She had a fine profile, I thought. Yes, certainly, a remarkable profile."

They were near the house by this time, and in the excitement of meeting with his sister and the long conversation which followed he hardly thought of Edith again until dinner was announced and she came in with Godfrey.

That young man had soon grown tired of listening to talk about people and things dating back to a time he could not remember, and had sauntered out into the grounds in quest of Edith, who was more to his taste than the close drawing-room and the invalid on the couch.

Edith was in the summer-house now, and Godfrey joined her there, and in his pleasant, winning way asked if he was intruding, and if he might come in and occupy one of the chairs, which looked so tempting under the green vines.

"It was an awful bore to hear old folks talk about a lot of antediluvians," he said; "and if she did not mind he would sit with her awhile."

Edith nodded assent and motioned him to a chair, which he took, and, removing his soft hat and brushing back his curls, he said:

"Now let us talk."

To talk was Godfrey's delight; and when to Edith's interrogatory "What shall we talk about?" he replied "Whatever you like," and she rejoined "Tell me, then, of yourself and your home," he mentally pronounced her a fine girl, with no nonsense about her; and in less than an hour had told nearly all he knew of himself and of his family. They had a splendid place, he said, not big and rambling, but pleasant in every way, and home-like, with such a fine view of the distant hills and river. "You do not know how beautiful our river is. Why, it beats the Rhine all to nothing."

"Have you seen the Rhine?" Edith asked, smiling at this enthusiastic youth.

"No," and Godfrey blushed as he met her smile; "but I've read of it, and heard Alice Creighton rave about it by the hour. You ought to see the view from our tower though. It is magnificent."

How Edith's heart throbbed as she listened to his animated description of a place she, too, knew so well, though of her knowledge she dared not give a sign; and how she longed to question her companion of that grave on the hillside, but she could not, and as Godfrey evidently expected her to say something she asked if he had always lived at Schuyler Hill.

"No; I was born where one ought to be born to be all right, you know—in a West-end mansion in Grosvenor Square, so that the first breath I drew was sufficiently stuffy and aristocratic; but I went to the country when I was a little shaver, five or six years old. Father took the old house down and built the new one. I never shall forget it—never, for the dreadful thing which happened."

Edith knew what was coming, and steeled herself to listen to the details of that tragedy which had coloured her whole life.

Again the fingers of iron were clutching her throat, and suffocating her almost to madness, while Godfrey told of the young man whom he liked so much, and who had saved another's life at the loss of his own.

"And when they reached him the grass was wet with blood, and he lay white and still and dead."

Godfrey's voice trembled as he said these words, and he paused a moment in his tale, while Edith clasped her hands tightly together and tried to speak, but could not for the smothered sensation choking and stifling her so.

"We buried him in our own vault, and erected a monument, and there are many flowers round the spot," Godfrey continued.

And then he glanced at Edith and, starting up, exclaimed:

"Why, what is the matter? You are whiter than a ghost. You are not going to faint? You must not faint! I do not know what to do with girls who faint. Alice did it once, or made believe, and I kissed her and brought her to."

He did not kiss Edith, or offer to; but he fanned her with his soft hat until she waved him off, and found voice to say:

"It is the heat, and your vivid description of that poor fellow's death. Did you tell me he was married?"

She asked the question from an intense desire to know if anything had ever been said of herself in connection with the dead.

"No, he was not married, but there was some talk of an affair du cour between him and a young girl, who went off soon after. There's a spider on your dress, Miss Lyle. Why?"—and as if it had just occurred to him Godfrey continued—"your name is the same as his. It cannot be, though, that you were at all related. He lived near Alnwick. On our way from Scotland, father and I called on his friends, a sister and widowed mother—poor but honest women, as the biographers say. The mother lives with her daughter, and we gave them two hundred pounds, and the young woman promised to call the little boy after me. The governor—that's father—did not quite like it, but I don't see any harm. Why, I've named three different babies at Schuyler Hill, all the children of Mrs. Peterkin Vandusenishsen. Two of them are twins—and I called one Godfrey Schuyler, and the other Schuyler Godfrey—while the third, which happened to be a girl, was christened Alice Oughton—that's a young lady who is a great deal at Schuyler Hill—and, oh, so proud! You ought to have seen her bit of a pug nose go up when she heard the Dutch baby baptized. Why, she nearly jumped out of her skin when Mrs. Van—as I call her for short—on being asked for the name replied: 'Alice Oughton Vandusenishsen, if you please!' The last was a suggestion of my own, by way of making a more striking impression on Alice, because you see, Mrs. Vandusenishsen had a son—Peterkin, junior, who was in love with Miss Oughton, and used to send her cakes and sticks of candy. The day before the christening I dressed up like a gipsy and deceived the girls and told their fortune and said Alice would marry a Dutchman, with an awful long name, like Vandusenishsen. So complete was my disguise that they did not suspect me, and when Alice heard the name at church, Alice Oughton Vandusenishsen, she started up as if to forbid the bans, and then catching sight of my face she understood it at once, and was so angry, and when we were home from church she tried and said she hated me and would never speak to me again. But she got over it, and last Christmas sent a wax doll to her namesake."

Godfrey had wandered very far from the woman on the heather hills who had called Abelard Lyle her son, and though Edith wished to know something more of her she did not venture to question her companion lest he should wonder at her interest in an entire stranger. She had laughed immoderately at his account of the babies named after himself and Miss Alice, and when he finished she said:

"You must be very fond of children, I think."

"Yes, I am. I'd like a homeful, and when I marry I mean to have enough boys to make a brass band. I told Alice so once and her pug went higher than it did when she heard the baby's name. She said I was very insulting, and that she hated boys, and me most of all. I knew she didn't though, because you see—Well, Alice has two thousand a year and that will straighten the worst case of turn-up nose in the world. She is an orphan and father is her guardian, and he and mother and Uncle Oatvert, that's my half-uncle and Alice's too, put their heads together and thought she'd be a good match for me, and it is rather an understood thing that we will marry some when, but I don't believe we are half as likely to as if they'd said nothing about it. A fellow don't want his wife picked out and brought to him off-hand as Eve was brought to Adam."

Here Godfrey paused, and rising from his chair shook his curly locks, a habit of his when he was interested or excited, and as his sister Julia said, "had talk on the brain." He certainly had it now, for Edith was the first one he had found whom he had cared to talk to for some time, and after two or three shakes he resumed his seat, and told her of himself particularly; how he was going to college the next year, if he were home in time, and after that intended to study law and distinguish himself, if possible.

"Mother was very proud of me, and hoped great things of me," he said. "I do not wish to disappoint her, for though she is dead I cannot help thinking that she knows about me just the same, and when I am tempted to yield to what you call small voices I always feel her thin white hand on my head where she said it not long before she died, and said, 'Be a

good and great man, Godfrey, and avoid the first approaches of evil.' Mother was what they call a fashionable woman, but she was good, and so sure as there is a Heaven so sure she is there, and I've never smoked, nor touched a drop of spirits, nor sworn a word since she died, and I never mean to either."

Godfrey's voice was low and tender, and his manner subdued when he spoke of his mother, but very different when he touched upon his sisters, and ridiculed Julia's fine-lady airs and Emma's readiness to be "stuffed"—his definition for believing everything she heard even to the most preposterous story.

They were at Schuyler Hill now, he said, and Alice was there too, studying with their governess, Miss Browning, who, between the three, was awfully nagged, though she was quite as airy and stuck up as Alice and Julia, and called him "that dreadful boy!"

"Boy indeed, and I most eighteen, and standing five foot ten in my socks, to say nothing of this incipient badge of manhood."

And he stroked complacently his chin and upper lip, where the beginning of a brown beard was visible.

How he had rattled on, his fresh young face glowing and lighting up with his excitement, and how intently Edith listened and watched the play of his fine features and admired his boyish beauty!

Surely in him there was nothing but goodness and truth, and as she looked at him she felt glad that his young life was spared, though she could not understand why her husband must have been sacrificed for him.

Once in her bitterness she had felt that she hated Godfrey Schuyler, but she did not hate him now, and as she walked slowly with him toward the house she would have given much to have been as fresh and frank and open as he was, instead of living the deception she was living.

And to what intent? What good had the deception ever done her? What good could it do her, and why continue it longer? Why not be just what she was, with no concealment hanging over her, and startling her oftentimes with a dread of discovery?

Why not tell Godfrey all about herself just as he had told her of himself? Surely his recent talk with her would warrant such confidence, and why not commence at once a new life by openness and sincerity, even though she lost her place by it?

"I'll do it and brave my mother, who alone has stood in my way so long," she thought.

And without giving herself time to remember she began:

"Mr. Schuyler—"

But before she could say more he interrupted her with:

"Don't, please, call me that. I'm too much of a boy. Nobody says that but Alice when she is in a highfalutin' mood. Call me Godfrey, please, unless the name is too suggestive of 'Godfrey's Cordial,' in which case say Schuyler, but pray leave off the Mister till my whiskers will at least cast a shadow on the wall. Why, I darney I shall call you by your first name yet. You cannot be much my senior. How old are you, Miss Lyle?"

It was a question which a little later in life, when more accustomed to the world and its usages, Godfrey would not have asked.

But Edith answered, unhesitatingly:

"I am twenty-seven."

"Zounds!" said Godfrey. "You don't look it. I did not imagine you to be more than twenty. Why, you might almost be my mother! No, it will never do to call you Edith. Father's eyebrows would actually meet in the centre at such audacity on my part; that's a trick he has of scowling when disagreeably surprised. Notice it sometimes, please. The only wrinkle in his face is that valley between his eyes."

They were in the hall by this time, and bowing to her voluble acquaintance, Edith passed on to her room, where for half an hour or more she sat thinking of the strange Providence which had brought her so near to her past life, and wondering, too, what the result would be, and if she should tell Godfrey as she had fully intended to do when he interrupted her with his tide of talk. It did not seem as easy to do it now as it had a little while ago; the good opportunity was gone and might not return.

While thus musing the dressing bell rang, and, turning from the window, she began to dress for dinner with rather more interest than usual. Her anxiety would not allow a very extensive or expensive wardrobe, even if she had desired it, which she did not. Her taste was simple and she was one of the few to whom every colour and style is becoming. Whatever she wore looked well upon her, and in a little country town she would have undoubtedly set the fashion for all.

Selecting now from her wardrobe a soft, fleecy, gray tissue, with trimmings of pale blue, her favour-

ite colour, she tied about her throat a bit of rich lace which Mrs. Sinclair had given her, and wore the pretty set of pink coral, also that lady's gift. It was not often that she curled her hair, but to-day she let two heavy ringlets fall upon her neck, and knew herself how well she was looking when, at the ringing of the second bell, she descended to the hall, where Godfrey was waiting for her.

He had thought her very handsome in her morning wrapper and garden hat, and when he saw her now he gave a suppressed kind of whistle, and with as much freedom as if she had been Alice Oughton or one of his sisters said to her:

"Ain't you nobby though?"

It is doubtful if Edith knew just what nobby meant, but she set it down as colloquial, and knew she was complimented.

"Allow me," Godfrey said, and, offering her his arm, he conducted her to the dining-room, where his aunt and father were already assembled.

CHAPTER IX.

This bud of love by Summer's ripening breath
May prove a beautiful flower when next we meet.
—Shakespeare.

MR. SCHUYLER looked up in some surprise when he saw the couple come in, and the scowl between the eyes of which Godfrey had spoken was plainly perceptible.

"My son is getting very familiar with that girl," was his thought, but he was very polite to Edith, who sat near to him, and during the dinner he occasionally addressed some remark to her, while his eyes wandered often to her face with a questioning look, which brought a bright colour to her cheek, and made her wonder if he was thinking of the young girl who had looked at him from among the vine leaves and told him Abelard's name.

He was not thinking of her; he was only speculating upon the rare beauty of the face beside him, and trying vaguely to recall where he had seen one like it.

"In some picture gallery; a fancy piece, I think," was his conclusion, as with a growing interest in Edith he resolved to question his sister concerning her at the first opportunity.

As yet he had only talked with Mrs. Sinclair of the past, and all that had come to them since their last meeting years ago. She had told him of her life and failing health, so apparent to him that as she talked he had involuntarily taken her thin hands in his, and wished he had done so her sooner, and then he told her of himself and his children and his wife, who, whatever she might have been while living, had died a good, true woman.

Of Godfrey he had spoken with all a father's pride for his only son, saying that he hoped this trip would tone him down somewhat and make him more of a man and less of a wild, teasing boy; but of Edith he made no mention. Indeed, he had not given her a thought until he saw her come in on Godfrey's arm, when there awoke within him a strange kind of interest in her, and an inexplicable feeling that in some way she was to affect him or his. He supposed her much younger than she was, and noticing Godfrey's evident admiration, he only resolved to leave London very soon, and take the lad out of harm's way, if indeed any harm threatened him from this beautiful woman, who fascinated and attracted him as well.

"Sister," he said to Mrs. Sinclair when dinner was over and they were alone together, "who is this Miss Lyle? She has a remarkable face."

Most women have a hobby, and Mrs. Sinclair's was Edith, of whom she was never tired of talking. She had liked her from the first, and two years of intimate acquaintance had only increased her fondness for the girl, and for hours she would sit and sing her praises if she could but find a listener. So, now, when her brother said what he did, she began at once:

"Yes, she is a remarkable person every way. She has been with me more than two years, and I like her better every day. Such a face and figure are rarely seen, and her manners would become a princess, and yet she is only the daughter of a poor squire, who must have made a foolish marriage with one not his equal. I cannot abide the girl's mother. I've never seen her but once, and then she impressed me very unfavourably. Edith must be like her father, he is dead and she mother takes in lodgers."

"Ah," and Mrs. Schuyler's voice was indicative of disappointment; but his next question was:

"How old is this girl?"

"Twenty-seven, I believe," was the reply, though she looked much younger.

"Yes, she does. I thought her about twenty," Mr. Schuyler said, and with his fear for Godfrey removed he arose and joined the young people, who had just come into the music-room.

"Edith," Mrs. Sinclair called, "play something for my brother."

It was Mrs. Sinclair's right to command, Edith's business to obey, and without a word of dissent she sat down and played, with Godfrey on one side of her and his father on the other, both listening with rapt attention to her fine playing and both admiring the soft, white, shapely hands which managed the keys so skilfully.

"Edith, dear, sing that pathetic little thing, 'I'm sitting alone to-night, darling.' You can surely manage that, it is written so low," and rising from the couch where she had been reclining Mrs. Sinclair came into the music-room, and said, apologetically, to her brother: "Her voice is not strong and cannot reach the higher notes. She had a great fright when she was quite young, wasn't it, Edith?"

"Yes," Edith answered, faintly, as she felt the iron hand closing around her throat and shutting down all power to sing even the lowest note.

"Oh, hang it all, I don't like sitting alone at night, I'd rather have somebody with me, so give us your jolliest piece," Godfrey said, making Edith laugh in spite of herself, and lifting the invisible hand, so that her voice came back again; and at Mrs. Sinclair's second request, she sang:

"I am sitting alone to-night, darling,
Alone in the dear old room;
And the sound of the rain,
As it falls on the pane,
Makes darker the gathering gloom.

"For I know that it falls on a grave, darling,
A grave 'neath the evergreen shade,
Where I laid you away,
One bright autumn day,
When the flowers were beginning to fade.

"Oh, lonely and drear was that hour, darling,
And my heart to its depths was stirred,
For I knew never more
Would your feet cross the floor,
Or the sound of your voice be heard."

Oh, how soft and low and sweet was the voice which sang the song of which Abelard Lyle had been so fond, and there was almost a tear in Godfrey's eye, and his father was beginning to look very grave, when the white hands suddenly stopped and fell with a crash among the keys, while Edith gasped, "I can't finish it; the iron fingers are on my throat, just as they were that dreadful day."

She evidently did not quite know what she was saying, and her face was deathly pale.

"You are ill, Miss Lyle; come into the air!" Mr. Schuyler said, and leading her out upon the verandah he made her sit down, while Mrs. Sinclair brought her smelling-salts, and Godfrey hovered about disconsolately, remembering the scene in the summer-house, and wondering if she had such attacks often. "Hysterical, perhaps," he thought, and, having knocked his head against his father's, when they both stooped to pick up Edith's handkerchief, he thought he was de trop, and walked away, saying to himself: "I do believe the old gent is bit hard. Wouldn't it be fun to call that regal creature mother?"

He laughed aloud at the idea, but did not think it would be fun, and did not quite believe in his father's being "bit," either; but when, half an hour later, he returned and found him still sitting by Edith, who had recovered herself, and was talking with a good deal of animation, he felt irritated and impatient, and went off to his room, and wrote in a kind of journal he was keeping. His entry that night was in part as follows:

"Oakwood is a fine old place, with an extensive park, a smoking-room, fine stable, a dog-kennel, and seven servants, to take care of two unprotected females. Edith Lyle, aged 27, is the handsomest woman I ever saw. Her features are perfect, especially her nose, which might have been the model for the Greek Slave. Not a bit of a pug about that, and her eyes are large and soft and liquid, as those of the ox-eyed Juno (I like that classical allusion, it shows reading), while her ears are the tiniest I ever saw—just like little pink sea-shells—and her splendid brown hair, with a shade or two of sunshine in it, rippling back from her smooth white brow, just exactly curly enough, and natural, too, I'll be bound. She doesn't put it up in crimps, not she. Why, what a scarecrow Alice Creighton was, though, that time I caught her with those two forks hanging down about her eyes, with a kind of horse-shoes on them. I like people to look natural, as I am sure Edith is. I wonder what makes her go off into a kind of faint all of a sudden. She did it twice to-day, and I would not wonder to find her given to hysterics. The governor is bit. I never knew him seem so much interested in any one before. The idea of his leading her into the air and then holding those salts to her nose till he strangled her—bah!"

And while Godfrey wrote thus in his journal his father sat talking to Edith, and wondering to find how much she knew and how sensibly she expressed herself.

Mr. Schuyler was not a man of many words,

and seldom talked much to any one, but there was something about Edith which interested him greatly, and he sat by her until the twilight began to close around them, and his sister came to warn him against taking cold and exposing Edith too. Then he went into the house, and, without exactly knowing it, felt a little disappointed when she left the room and did not come back again.

Mr. Schuyler kept a kind of journal, too, in which he occasionally jotted down the incidents of the day; and that night, after recounting his arrival at Oakwood and his grief at finding his sister so great an invalid, he added:

"She is exceedingly fortunate in having secured a most admirable person for her companion. Besides being educated and refined and beautiful, Miss Lyle impresses me as a remarkable woman. Yes, as a very remarkable woman."

The next night Godfrey recorded:

"There is nothing so foolish as an old man in love! I wonder if he thinks she can care for him!—and yet he blushed to-day when I found him turning the leaves of her music and listening to her singing. I never knew him listen two minutes to Alice and Julia—and no wonder, such operatic screeches as they make when Professor La Farge is there, and the boys in the street stop and mock them. Edith's voice is the sweetest and the softest I ever heard, and so sad that it makes a man feel for his pocket handkerchief. Why, even father told Annie that her singing made him think of poor Emily, meaning my mother! It is a bad sign when a live woman like Edith Lyle makes a man think of his dead wife. I wonder what she thinks of him! She looks as unconcerned as a block of marble; but you can't tell what is in a woman's mind, and widowers are awful. Why, there have been forty women after father already; but I must say he has behaved admirably thus far, and never spoken to one outside our own family, unless it was Miss Esther Armstrong, and that is ach-ching. She is the school-mistress and has thrashed me more than twenty times."

In Mr. Schuyler's journal the record was as follows:

"I wonder if my dear Emily knows how much Miss Lyle's singing makes me think of her and her grave under the evergreen, where we did."

"Lay her away one bright autumn day,
When the flowers were beginning to fade."

Miss Lyle has a singularly sweet, plaintive voice and it affects me strangely, for I did not know I cared for music. Emily never sang, and the young ladies at home make very singular sounds sometimes. It is strange about her losing her voice, or rather her power to reach the higher notes. It must have been a fearful shock of some kind, and she evidently does not like to talk of it; for, when I questioned her a little and advised her seeing a physician, she seemed disturbed and agitated, and even distressed. Dr. Malcolm would know just what to do for her, and she ought to have medical advice, for she has a remarkable voice—a very remarkable voice."

When Mr. Schuyler liked a thing it was "remarkable," and when he liked it very much it was "very remarkable."

So when he wrote what he did of Edith and her voice he had passed upon her his highest encomium.

Four weeks went by, and he still lingered at Oakwood, and on the last day of the fourth week wrote again:

"I fully expected to have been in France before this time, but have stayed on for what reason I hardly know. It is very pleasant here, and my sister's health is such that I dislike to leave her so soon, even though I leave her in excellent hands. Miss Edith is certainly a very remarkable person, and I am more interested in her than I have been in any one since I first met my dear Emily."

Here Mr. Schuyler paused, and laying down his pen went back in thought to the time when he was young and first met Emily Rossiter, the proud, pale, light-haired girl, whose three hundred thousand in prospect had made her a belle in society and, little as he liked to own it now that the daisies were growing above her, had commended her in his consideration. His courtship was short and wholly void of passion or ecstasy. She knew he was a suitable match and she accepted him readily enough, and they were married without so much as a kiss exchanged between them. He had so far unbent from his cold dignity as to hold her hand in his own while he asked her to be his wife, but as soon as her promises were given he put it back in her lap very respectfully, and said, "That little hand is now mine," and that was the nearest approach to love-making which he reached with Emily.

After marriage he was scarcely more demonstrative, though always kind and considerate, and when at her father's death it was found that her fortune was one hundred thousand instead of three, he kept

it to himself if he felt any chagrin, and never in a single instance checked her extravagance, but suffered her in everything to have her way. At the last, however, when she stood face to face with death, and her life with him lay all behind, there came a change and he could yet feel the passionate kiss which the white lips pressed upon his as they called him "dear husband."

"Poor Emily," he said, aloud; "we were very happy together."

Just then, upon the terrace below there was the sound of a clear, sweet voice, Edith's voice, which thrilled him as Emily's never had, and Edith looked up to the window of the room adjoining his, where Godfrey was calling to her. It was a beautiful face, and as he watched her gliding away among the shrubbery he thought how she would brighten and adorn his handsome house at Schuyler Hill, and how proud he should be of her when his money had arrayed her in the apparel befitting his wife.

Yes, it had come to that.

Every barrier of pride and prejudice and early training had gone down before Edith Lyle's wonderful beauty, and the proud, haughty man was ready to offer her his name and hand on one condition.

Her mother could not go with her, and in taking him she must give up her family friends, if indeed she had any besides the mother.

Her he had never seen, but his sister disliked her and that was enough, if he ignored, as he tried to think he did, the fact that she took in lodgers and sewing.

Many highly respectable ladies did that he knew, but he had a feeling that Edith's mother was not highly respectable, and he doubted that she was a lady even.

His sister when questioned with regard to Edith's family had reported the mother as pushing, curious, disagreeable woman, who assumed to be what she certainly was not.

"Edith is not like her in the least, she must inherit her natural refinement and delicacy from her father," Mrs. Sinclair said.

And Mr. Schuyler was satisfied if one side of the house was common to that.

As a Schuyler he could afford to stoop a little in his second marriage, and in his heart he felt that it was stooping to marry his sister's hired companion.

As far as position was concerned, he might as well take poor, plain Etta Armstrong, the village school-mistress, who, in point of family, was undoubtedly Edith's equal.

There was, however, this difference.

The people at home could know nothing of Edith's antecedents, save that she was the daughter of a curate, while another fact which outweighed all else was her exceeding great beauty and queenly style, which, with proper surroundings and influence, would place her on the highest wave of society.

And he was ready to give her the surroundings and the influence, and felt a thrill of exultant pride as he saw her in fancy at the head of his table and moving through his handsome rooms, herself the handsomest appendage there.

"I may as well settle it at once," he thought.

And the next day he found his opportunity and took it, with what success the reader will learn from a page in Edith's diary.

CHAPTER X.

I honoured him, I loved him, and will weep
My date of life out for his sweet life's loss.

Shakespeare.

OAKWOOD, July 15th, 18—.

Am I dreaming, or is it a reality that Mr. Schuyler has asked me to be his wife? Mr. Schuyler, the proud millionaire of Schuyler Hill, the man whose hired workman Abelard was, asked me to be his wife—me, who spoke to him once with a breaking heart when in his pride he stood before our door, questioning my mother of the name and age and birthplace of one to whom he wished to pay respect as the preserver of his son's life! He thinks I am beautiful; he told me so—more beautiful than any woman he had ever seen, and I would make such a rare gem for his house, and he would be so proud of me and surround me with every kindness and luxury.

This is what he said, or the substance of it, and in his voice, usually so cold and calm, there was a little trembling, and his forehead flushed as he went on to state the one condition on which he would do me this honour.

My mother must have no part in my grandeur! She must remain here. If necessary, money should be freely given for her needs, but she could not live with me!

Poor mother, with all her planning and her dreams of my brilliant future she never once thought that when the chance came she would be left out and have

neither part nor lot in the question! What would she say if she knew it, and what will she say when I tell her I refused him? For I did, and told him it could never be. For a moment, though, weak woman that I am, I was tempted to end this life of dependence and poverty, and take what he offered me—not his love, he never hinted at such an emotion, and I think that feeling is rare in such natures as his. I doubt if he felt it for his late wife, whom he married in his May time, and surely now in his October he has no place for foolishness of that kind. He does not love me, but he admires my face and form, and would no doubt be very kind and careful of me just as he would be kind to and careful of a favourite horse whose looks depended on such treatment. He would hang upon me jewels rare, with silks and laces and satins, and I could wear them and feel my heart break afresh each time I looked from my window across the lawn to that grave under the evergreen where Abelard is lying. I should hear him discussed, no doubt, and with Mr. Schuyler stand by the mound and listen to a story I know so well, and loathe myself for the deceit I was acting, for if I were there as Mr. Schuyler's wife my life would be one tissue of falsehood and deceit. He, of all men in the world, would not take me if he knew the truth, and during that interval when I hesitated I had resolved not to tell him! But only for an instant, thank Heaven—only for an instant did the tempter have me in his control ere I cast him behind me with the resolve that whatever else I might do I would be frank with the man whom I made up my mind to marry, and as I had not made up my mind to marry Mr. Schuyler I did not tell him who I was. I only declined his offer, and said it could not be, when his remark that I did not know what I was doing staggered me. I burst out, impetuously:

"I do know what I am doing. I am refusing a match which the world—your world—would say was far above me, a dependent, but, Mr. Schuyler, poor as I am, and humble in position, I am rich in the feeling which will not let me sell myself for a name and a home. And if I accepted you it would be only for that. I respect you, Mr. Schuyler. I believe you to be sincere in your offer, and that you would try to make me happy, but you could not do it unless I loved you, and I do not; besides—"

Here he stopped me, and took both my hands in his, and seemed almost tender and loveable as he said:

"Edith, I did not suppose you could love me so soon, but I hoped you might grow to it when you found how proud I was of you, and how I would try to make you happy."

"Mr. Schuyler," I interrupted him with, "you have talked of your pride in me, and your admiration of me, but have said nothing of love. Answer me now, please. Do you love me?"

He wanted to say yes, I know, for his chin quivered, and there was in his face the look of one fighting with some principle hard to be overcome. In his case it was the principle of truth and right, and it conquered every other feeling and compelled him to answer:

"Perhaps not as you in your youth count love. Our acquaintance has been too short for that; but I can and I will; only give me a chance. Don't decide now. I will not take it as a decision if you do. Wait till my return from the Continent, and then tell me what you will do. I had hoped to take you with me, and thought that the glories of Rome, seen by me twice before, would gain new interest with your eyes beside me. But my sister needs you; stay with her during my absence, and try to like me a little, and when I come back I know I shall be able to say to you: 'Yes, Edith Eyle, I love you.'"

I was touched and softened by his manner quite as much as by what he said, and I replied to him, gently:

"Even then my answer must be the same. My love was buried years ago. I have a story to tell you of the past."

Again those dreadful fingers clutched my throat as I tried to tell him of Abelard, and my dead baby, buried I knew not where. My voice was gone, and my face, which was deadly pale, frightened him I know, for he led me to the window and pushed my hair from my brow and said to me:

"Edith, please do not distress yourself with any tale of the past. You say you have loved and lost that love, and let that suffice. I suspected something of the kind, but you are not less desirable to me. I have loved and lost, and in that respect we are even; so let nothing in the past deter you from giving me the answer I so much desire when I return to Oakwood. Godfrey is coming this way. I hear his whistle; so good-night, and Heaven bless you, Edith."

He pressed my hand and left the room just as

Godfrey entered the door in another direction, singing softly when he saw me:

"She sat by the door one cold afternoon,
To hear the wind blow and look at the moon;
So passive was Edith, my dear, darling Edith."

He did not get any farther, for something in his light badinage jarred upon my feelings just then, and, assuming a severe dignity, I said:

"You mistake the name. I am not Edith. I am Miss Lyle."

He looked surprised an instant, and then with a comical smile he said:

"I beg your pardon, Miss Lyle. I meant Kathleen O'Moore, of course, but seeing you at the moment I made a mistake in the name, and no wonder, dazed as I am with a letter I just received from Alice, who hopes I shall return home greatly improved in mind, and taste, and manners, as if the latter could be improved. She sent her picture too. Would you like to see it?"

He passed me the carte-de-visite, and I saw the likeness of a girl who he said was only sixteen, but whom I should have taken for twenty, at least judging from the dress and the expression of the face, which I did not like. It was too supercilious, if not insolent to suit me, while the turned-up nose added to the look. And still there was a style about her which marked her as what is called a "high-bred girl," and I have no doubt she will eventually become a belle, with her immense fortune and proud, arrogant demeanour.

"What do you think of it?" Godfrey asked; and feeling sure that with regard to her his feelings could not be wounded I answered:

"I do not quite like her expression, and she looks too old for you."

"Good! I'll tell her that sometime when she is nagging me unmercifully," Godfrey said, adding: "I had a letter from Julia, too, with her photograph, and also one of our house and grounds. This is Julia."

It was the face of a brunette, dark, handsome, but proud and imperious, and I was glad that she was not to be my step-daughter.

"Julia is handsome, except her ears, which are as big as a fan," Godfrey said, and I replied:

"Yes, she is handsome, and will make a brilliant woman."

"This is our home," he continued, and he put into my hand a large photograph of the house on Schuyler Hill, and a considerable portion of the grounds.

There were the tops of the evergreens, and there was a white stone shining through the green. Still it might be Mrs. Schuyler's, I thought, and I said to Godfrey, who was standing by me:

"Whose monument is that?"

"That? Let me see. Why, that is young Lyle's, the man who saved my life. You remember I told you about him? Mother's is farther on and out of sight."

How faint and ill I felt to have Abelard's grave thus brought near to me, and there was a blur before my eyes which for a moment prevented me from seeing distinctly.

Then it cleared away and I was able to examine the picture and see how the grounds had been improved since that morning when Abelard's blood was on the grass where now the flowers were growing.

It was a fine place, and as I looked at it and thought it had been offered me, ay, might yet be mine, if I would take it, did I feel any regret for having refused it? None whatever. If I were to tell Mr. Schuyler everything I should never go there, and if I were to go without telling him my life would be one of misery and hatred of myself. No, better bear with poverty and servitude than live a greater deceit than I am living now.

So I gave the picture back to Godfrey, and bidding him good-night came up to my room, where I could think over the events of that eventful day.

The following is an extract from Godfrey's journal:

Edith (I can call her so on paper without any fear of having my head taken off) is cold as an icicle. Gracious! didn't she snub me when I sang "dear, darling Edith." I did not know there was so much fire in her eyes, and I had to shake myself hard before I was quite myself again. What a regal creature she is, and I do believe father thinks so too, but that would be an awful match for her. Julia would scratch her eyes out, and if ever I should marry Alice—which I never shall, but if I do—and bring her home to Schuyler Hill, wouldn't I have lively times between step-mother and wife! But that is too absurd to consider for a moment.

I wish she was younger, or that I was older. Let me see—'most eighteen from 'most twenty-eight leaves ten. No, that will never do. A man may not marry his grandmother, much less a boy, as Julia calls me in her letter, giving me all sorts of advice.

Alice's letter was a very good one, only why need

she call me "Dear Godfrey" when I'm not her dear Godfrey, and never shall be? Why, she looks older than Miss Lyle herself in that picture with her hair stuck on the top of her head like a Chinese. I believe I'll tear the picture up. Miss Lyle did not like it, neither do I, and I will not have it in my possession. I wonder if Ed—, Miss Lyle I mean—I wonder if she would give me hers. I mean to ask her to-morrow.

He did ask her and received no for his answer, and then tore up Alice's photograph, and packed his valise, and with his father set off for Paris the following day.

CHAPTER II.

I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality
That it is but a shadow's shadow. *Shakespeare.*

"And you refused him?"

"Yes, mother, I refused him."

"Are you crazy, child?"

"Not as crazy as I would be to accept him."

Edith was sitting with her mother in their little house when the above conversation took place. It was the day of Mr. Schuyler's departure for Paris, and she had driven into town with permission to stay to tea if she liked.

She had not intended to tell her mother what had been said to her by Mr. Schuyler, but when questioned about him something in her manner excited Mrs. Barrett's suspicion, and in her usual forcible way she wrung from her daughter the fact that Schuyler Hill had been offered to her daughter's acceptance and refused.

To say that Mrs. Barrett was angry would feebly express her emotions. In all her dreams for Edith she had never hoped for anything quite equal to an alliance with Mr. Schuyler, who, besides his immense fortune, boasted some of the best blood in England, and now that Edith had wilfully thrown the chance away she was exceedingly indignant, and expressed her disapprobation in terms so harsh and bitter that Edith, who seldom felt equal to a contest with her mother's fierce, strong will, roused herself at last and answered back:

"Mother, you have said enough, and you must stop now and listen to me. You upbraid me for having thrown away the chance for which you have waited so long, and to which you say you have shaped every act of your life since I was born, and you accuse me of ingratitude when you have done so much for me. Mother, for all the real good you have done me I am grateful, and you know how gladly I will work for you so long as I have health and strength to do so, but for the secrecy you have imposed upon me with regard to my past life I do not thank you, and could I only go backward a few years, or had my baby lived, I would have no concealments from the world, nothing of which I could not speak as I have now. To me it is no shame that I was once the wife of Abelard Lyle; the shame is that I try to hide it, and when Mr. Schuyler asked me to be his the truth sprang to my lips at once, and but for that terrible choking sensation which came upon me first when you took baby away I should have told him all."

"And ruined your prospects for ever," Mrs. Barrett said, angrily.

"Yes, ruined them for ever so far as Mr. Schuyler is concerned, but that would have mattered little," Edith answered, proudly. "I have no love for him; he has none for me. I asked him the question and he could not tell me yes. His fancy was caught, and he talked of my beauty, and grace, and voice, and culture, and hinted that I was a fitting picture for his handsome home. You saw Mrs. Schuyler once. You remember how pale, and sallow, and thin she was. Neither gems nor rich gay clothing could make her fair to look upon, and I have no doubt her husband would be prouder of me than he ever was of her, with all her money and Rossiter blood, that is, if he took me as Edith Lyle, the daughter of a curate and nothing more; but once let him know the truth, as he assuredly must have known it if I had for a moment considered his proposition—and think you he would not have spurned with contempt the widow of a carpenter, and that carpenter his own hired workman?"

"Not if he truly loved you," Mrs. Barrett interposed; and Edith answered, impetuously:

"But I tell you he does not love me. He only cares for my personal attractions—he would like to show me off as his young bride, whose family must be ignored, for, mother, he told me that distinctly; he said he knew nothing of my friends, and did not care to know, as he wished for me alone; that if I married him you must stay behind—a mother-in-law always made more or less trouble, and he preferred to have you remain where you are, and if money was needed for your support, it should always be forthcoming in sufficient amount for every comfort."

"And yet he knows nothing of me to dislike," Mrs. Barrett faltered, her countenance falling, and

her eyes having in them a look of great disappointment.

That she was to be set aside and have no part in Edith's grandeur had never occurred to her, and in fancy she was already luxuriously domiciled at Schuyler Hill, as the mother of the mistress and general superintendent of everything, with plenty of money at her command, and herself looked up to and envied by the very people who had once treated her slightly, and who would never suspect her as Mrs. Fordham. She looked much older now than she did eleven years ago, and her hair was white as snow, while the deep black she wore constantly was a still more complete disguise. So there was no danger of detection—no link to connect her with the cottage by the bridge where she once lived, or that grave under the evergreen. But all this was of no avail.

Mr. Schuyler would not have her on any terms, and knowing this she was the more easily reconciled to Edith's decision, until by dint of questioning she learned that Mr. Schuyler did not consider the matter settled, but would urge his suit again on his return to England. Then her old ambition revived, and with a mother's forgetfulness of self she thought:

"She shall accept him then. I will see her a lady if I starve in a garret."

But she wisely resolved to say no more upon the subject at present, and Edith had arisen to go, when downstairs came the patter of little feet, and a sweet, childish voice was heard warbling a simple Scottish ballad, and Edith caught a gleam of bright auburn hair falling under a white cape bonnet, as a young girl went past the window.

"Whose child is that? Has Mrs. Rogers come?" Edith asked.

Mrs. Barrett answered:
"She has been here nearly two weeks, and that is little Gertie Westbrooke."

(To be continued.)

MARRIED IN MASK.

CHAPTER XXV.

Prior checked to himself as he walked away in the direction of Mr. Truelove's house.

That gentleman had on several occasions, during the years of Bessie's absence, taunted him with the loss of his detective powers. Now all would be right again. He could hold up his head once more in the father's presence.

But what was the dismay of Prior, upon reaching the residence of Mr. Truelove, to see that the building was evidently disused. The shutters were all closed, and were covered with dust that had evidently been accumulating for weeks.

He rang the bell repeatedly, but no one answered the summons.

At last he mounted the steps of the adjoining mansion, and rang the bell.

A servant answered this summons, and to his inquiry: "Does no one occupy Mr. Truelove's house?" gave this reply: "No. The furniture was all taken away and sold months ago. Mr. Truelove has been ill, and his wife has taken him abroad to travel for his health. They have gone to Egypt."

The detective walked thoughtfully away. He was anxious to inform the parents of Bessie of the great joy in store for them.

He was determined to ascertain, if possible, their address in a foreign land, that he might write to them.

At present he could think of no one who would be likely to enlighten him upon the subject. He would ponder the matter and act upon it when his area of knowledge was enlarged.

The young lady was well provided for, and could afford to wait for the announcement of her real parentage.

In the meantime he had to attend to various matters in the detective line.

But he determined, while concealing what he knew of her, to approach her and ascertain what she knew of Sam's whereabouts.

In pursuance of this purpose he walked often before her residence disguised as a policeman, hoping to encounter her in the street alone.

But he failed utterly in meeting her.

He had too much business on his hands to devote all his time to watching her house.

So it chanced that several weeks passed by without an encounter.

Finally he addressed a note to her, and sent it through the post.

It ran thus:

"MRS. BESSIE THORNE.—If you are conscious that there is anything strange or mysterious regarding your real parentage you will be tempted to answer this letter of an entire stranger. If there is nothing mysterious about your childhood then you will throw

this letter, where it belongs, into the fire. I know whose child you really are. Your parents are good and noble people. I have known them many years. If you will reveal to me the exact extent of your knowledge regarding the whereabouts of a dark-eyed and handsome boy named Sam, who, several years ago, led you about the docks, I will convince you that I know your real father and mother. If you wish to communicate with me, openly or secretly, address me but one line at the general post office.

"PATIENCE.

"P. S.—Upon receiving your answer I will, if you desire it, cause one of the judges of the highest court in this city to make an appointment with you in his public court room, that he may assure you of the entire respectability and honourable character of the stranger who seeks an interview with you."

Prior visited the general post office every day for two weeks, hoping to receive an answer. To his joy it came at last, and ran thus:

"I am deliberating upon your proposal. I believe there is a mystery concerning me. Still I am very young, and must move cautiously. I will think the matter over. You have my address, and perhaps when you think it expedient to write again I may have made up my mind to grant you an interview.

"BESSIE THORNE."

Prior waited patiently for the leaven of curiosity to work upon the young lady's mind. After several weeks he wrote to her again.

"I entreat you to grant me an interview. Please answer."

Three days elapsed and no reply came. On the fourth day a gentleman accosted him in the street and informed him that Henry Thorne, the merchant, was in great distress. His daughter had been abducted, or had run away of her own accord, on a stormy night, and no trace of her could be had.

"I told Mr. Thorne of the skill with which you had ferreted out some matters for me," said the gentleman, "and I advised him to send and secure your services. He bade me send you to him. You had better go to his house. He will pay you liberally if you find her."

Before nightfall Prior was in consultation with Henry Thorne, in the parlour of his residence. The merchant had conducted him to the chamber of the missing daughter, and shown him the exact condition of the apartment when the door had been burst open and the loss of Bessie discovered.

The clothes that she had been known to wear were all found with the exception of her shawl, furs, and hood. She must have gone off in garments of which the family knew nothing.

"I feel confident that she has been enticed away by some pretender," said Mr. Thorne.

Then he exhibited to the detective the note which had arrived for Bessie on the morning succeeding her flight.

Prior had no difficulty in recognizing his own handwriting. But he took possession of the note, and after pretending to study the chirography put it in his pocket, as he said, for future use.

He finally, after promising the merchant to devote his energy to the unveiling of the mystery, left the house. He was very gloomy and depressed. In the full tide of success he was again baffled, and felt that he had now nothing satisfactory to write to the real father of the girl. He was fearfully disappointed at the turn affairs had taken. He had relied upon an interview with the young lady to put him again upon the track of Sam. Now she was lost again. What an unsatisfactory conclusion to his work of years. Sam was gone, Bessie was gone, and the harp and chain had gone with her.

With resolute and unflinching zeal, however, he now turned to the spot where he had last seen Sam. He clung to that street-corner day after day whenever he could spare the time from his other duties as a detective. At last he was rewarded, as the reader already knows. Sam's face came into view once more. He was followed patiently until all was known about him that was essential. Then Prior notified the brother of the murdered woman, and the young banker was arrested and imprisoned to await the trial.

"Sam goes now to prison, and I shall find Bessie," were his exultant words.

He believed that the notoriety of the trial would bring out Bessie in some way to public view. She had doubtless witnessed the murder. It was more than likely that she had not forgotten the brave lad who had fought so many brave battles with Red Eyed Mag in her behalf. She would read of the affair in the papers, and come forward in the defender's hour of need.

But Prior was resolved to gain access to the prisoner, and ascertain from him to what extent he was acquainted with the young lady's life and movements. Perhaps the young banker had full knowledge of her present whereabouts. Perhaps

she had never passed through any vicissitude or experience with which he had not been acquainted.

But the lawyer of the young banker, immediately upon being retained to defend the prisoner, had hastened to his cell and cautioned him against conversation with any one but his own friends.

When, therefore, Prior gained admittance to the prison, disguised as a newspaper reporter, he found great difficulty in drawing out the prisoner in conversation regarding even the most trivial matters.

At last Prior was left alone with Sam, and looking him full in the face said:

"Don't betray me. I am here in disguise. I am the detective who followed you for years, and have caused your arrest. But although I was employed to hunt you out I have no enmity toward you. I have fulfilled my duty to my employer by finding you and putting you in prison to await a trial. My duty is now ended so far as my employer is concerned. I have received my pay from him, and he has no farther claim upon me for service. But I have another employer. He desires me to find the little girl, Bessie, whom you carried away with you. Tell me where she is now, and I will reveal to you as a compensation for the intelligence an important fact which will go far toward securing your acquittal. A person with blood-stained garments, and carrying a blood-stained fork, was seen to leave the shanty on the night of the murder. The person threw suspicion originally upon you. Inform me of the girl's lurking place or present home, and I will tell your lawyer who this person is, and how I know the facts."

It was a terrible temptation to the prisoner to break his promise to the lawyer. His dark eyes glowed with the intensity of his emotion. After a profound silence, during which Prior watched him eagerly, he said:

"And that evidence, produced in court, would save me?"

"Why, look at it!" said the detective. "Don't you see that no jury would dare to convict you with such a startling fact before them? See! Another person leaves the shanty with blood on the dress and the very weapon in hand."

The temptation was great.

Sam saw the influence such evidence would naturally have upon the twelve men who were to decide the life and death question for him. But he stood firmly by his promise. He said:

"I can entertain no proposition without consulting my lawyer. Come and see me again another day."

Prior then departed, but with the confident expectation that the young man and his lawyer would be obliged to accept his proposal.

The lawyer was at once made acquainted with the detective's startling evidence by his client. He meditated upon the matter. Then he said:

"You told me that Old Hawk had once threatened you with the vengeance of the gang if you would not rejoin them."

"Yes," said the young banker. "His words were these: 'We'll swear that we saw you kill Red Eyed Mag.'"

"And now," said the lawyer, "this detective tells you that the person who was seen with the garments and the fork was the person who threw suspicion originally upon you?"

"Yes," said Sam.

"Do you know what my conclusion upon these two facts is?" said the lawyer. "It is this: Old Hawk and the person with the blood-stained fork are identical."

"It may be," said the young man, thoughtfully.

"I'll tell you what I think about this detective's revelation," continued the lawyer. "Ruffini has brought Old Hawk to see me. I knew the man at once. He was a member of my profession many years ago, but was banished the bar for misconduct, and was disgraced. He is a great scoundrel, but he knows the law. He knows enough of it to use it in his rascalities. You thought that by finding the long-lost Bessie you were securing a powerful witness in your behalf, if the gang should prosecute you for the murder. But Old Hawk knew that by giving Bessie to you in marriage he was placing you still more hopelessly in his power."

"And do you think," exclaimed the prisoner, "that he knew that at the time?"

"Pooh! Certainly," said his companion. "In his interview with me he told me that he knew exactly what the effect of your marriage would be. He used you when you fancied you were using him."

"Did he say to you at that interview what his intentions were upon my trial?"

"Yes. He said that he and all his comrades would swear to anything to get you clear—swear to an alibi, swear to anything. Under this state of things, if we can keep quiet regarding Bessie, we don't need the evidence which this detective offers. But if Old

Hawk should prove to be treacherous and expose our Bessie's stratagem, then we might be driven to put this detective in the box."

"What is your conclusion, then?" said the prisoner.

"My judgment is," said the lawyer, "that we must trust Old Hawk. He believes that you are one of them, that your life is essential to them, that your interests and their interests are identical. Therefore he will keep his mouth closed regarding Bessie. He has forgiven you for firing at him in order to secure pecuniary advantage. He will for the same reason not interfere with our Bessie's stratagem."

"Then I must refuse to have any farther intercourse with the detective?" said the prisoner.

"Undoubtedly," was the response. "Be as dumb to every one as you can."

Shortly after this interview the prisoner sent for his legal adviser again. When he arrived in the cell he said:

"What's the matter now, my young friend?"

"A reporter," said Sam.

"Oh, hang the reporters!" was the reply. "They make more mischief and cause the public to prejudge a case more than all the real facts in the world. What does the man want?"

"He wants to see my wife."

"Your wife?" exclaimed the lawyer, in dismay.

"Yes. He says the public are deeply interested in her and want a personal and accurate description of her."

"Why, you haven't got any wife. What do you mean? You haven't been talking about your wife?" exclaimed the counsellor, vehemently. "I'll throw up your case if you don't follow my advice and keep close-mouthed."

Sam waved his hand deprecatingly at the man's anger.

"I haven't said a word to the reporter," he pleaded. "Listen to me. He asked for an interview with my wife. He put in my hand this newspaper. Read that."

The lawyer ran his eyes over the column of the paper indicated by the prisoner's finger. The paper was not of recent date, but it contained a startling sensation article upon the resurrection of the daughter-in-law of the famous Nicholas Rudd by the skill of the Italian physician, Ruffini.

"Zounds!" roared out the Honourable Joseph Travers as he turned the paper over and looked at the date. "I never heard a word of this business. Wait a minute—wait a minute," he exclaimed, with the rapidity of a skilful general who is surprised by the enemy, but instantly wrests victory from apparent defeat. "You kept your mouth shut to this reporter?"

"I only told him I could not talk to him without the assent of my counsel."

"All right, then. When he comes again tell him that he shall see your wife at your father's house."

"My wife?" exclaimed Sam, in amazement.

"Yes; keep perfectly silent and I will make up a wife for you that will complicate matters, blind everybody's eyes to the real truth, and she shall sit beside you in court, closely veiled. Don't you see the point, my boy? We'll make these reporters do duty on our side."

And so another woman was about to enter the house of the woman-hater.

Joseph Travers encountered considerable opposition to his plan of introducing another woman into the dwelling of Nicholas Rudd. The aged banker had acquiesced in the coming of the young bride to his solemn mansion because he knew that without Bessie he could not enjoy the society of his adopted son. But to allow a strange woman the range of his apartments, simply to carry out the details of a conspiracy which was, to say the least, of doubtful benefit to the parties concerned, was such a violation of his woman-hating principles as to stagger him for the moment.

Then the lawyer, remarking his hesitation, urged him with intense warmth to do anything to make the wish of the younger Rudd secure.

"I'll—ave," he said, "that I can make the testimony of Bessie fall upon the jury with the force of the thunderbolt. Men have not such hard, methodical hearts that they can sit and listen to her words and then convict the prisoner. No, sir; if all be managed well and discreetly we can get her evidence before the jury. Once fixed in their minds that evidence will crush down all the hardship of the principle of law. These jurymen will not be lawyers, but men, with all the keen sense of justice that lies dormant in the human heart. Aid us now, sir, to palm off upon the public the false wife, and I will guarantee that final and perfect happiness will be secured to the real wife."

Then the aged banker spoke, seated beside a table upon which his arm rose and fell as he waxed warm in his discourse. His eye was still luminous, his

presence commanding, and his long, beautiful gray hair a marvel of silken loveliness.

Dr. Ruffini watched him with intense interest. Ever since his advent to the house the physician had been looking for some outburst which would confirm the story of Sam and the domestics. He had been waiting patiently for a remark which would confirm the impression that the great banker cherished hatred, absolute hatred, toward women.

"I have great prejudice against the sex," he said. "I am too near the grave to cherish resentment or apprehension against that which is only imaginary. But I fear the influence of woman. I cannot bear that one of them should gain admittance where she can intrigue, plot and scheme. Now my house is peaceful. There are no intrigues, no fascinations exerted here to stir up disturbance. I have led a calm life exteriorly in this mansion. It is all the comfort that there can ever be for me in home. If I in my old age introduce here, even temporarily, disturbing causes, will not all pronounce me an idiot? Once I loved woman. To me she was the angel of life. All that makes home lovely seemed to centre in her. I idolized her because my young heart was a poet's heart, and from the dawn of creation all who have lived and dreamed the poet's dream have made woman the angel. I too dreamed my young dream. And the angel seemed to come to me in real flesh and blood. Not only was she crowned with exquisite beauty, but her heart was heroic, and apparently full of all those grand qualities which historians say the sex have manifested in all lands and ages. I trusted her, after she became my wife, as one says he trusts Heaven. Alas! she betrayed me. Then the idol of gold with the feet of clay fell from my heart for ever. She was false, utterly false, and my heart a lie."

The old man paused.

His voice had been gradually growing low and dead as he approached the end. The last word was scarcely audible.

Dr. Ruffini had leaned eagerly forward to catch every word and expression of feature.

Then he said, after silence had been maintained for a moment, in a voice which startled his hearers:

"She was not false. She was the truest woman to you that ever breathed the breath of life."

The voice of the Italian doctor had entirely changed.

Nicholas Rudd started, and turned towards him.

"Did I hear you, sir, contradict me?"

"I intended no disrespect, sir," said the startling voice again. "I only fulfilled a duty obligatory on all upright men. I defended the innocent and the traduced."

"Sir," said Nicholas Rudd, "you are a gentleman and a scholar, and my guest. All courtesy is due to you. We are grateful also. Speak then what you know, for you may have heard the gossip of the far-off city where I left my unfortunate wife to run her career of shame, long, long years ago."

There was a nervous movement in the person of Rudd as he now faced the Italian and listened with intense curiosity for his words.

"Never before was a charge of shame made against that noble family into which you married."

"Ah! you know me then!" exclaimed the aged man, eyeing his guest in wonder.

"Know you, Major Laurens?" exclaimed the Italian. "Indeed I know you, and I can testify that you have been as brave and heroic a soldier and martyr as ever trod the soil of my native Italy."

"Ah, I know that voice," said the banker. "It speaks to me from the shadowy past. Who are you?"

"One who has sought you by sea and by land for many years, and now having found you dares to tell you that your life has been a stupendous error. You have wronged the noble and the true woman who loved you. I come to you at her request that you may die with love and penitence upon your lips."

"Speak! speak!" said the banker. "Would to Heaven that you could indeed bring me peace and wipe away this agony, this long, long agony here."

Nicholas Rudd pressed his aged hand upon his heart while he gazed in wonder upon the Italian.

"Tell me, sir," said the doctor, "why you left in precipitate haste your wife, once the Lady Carang-nolia."

"Great Heavens! then you do know my history! I left her in agony, never again to look upon her face while the sun shines and the grass grows."

"Why? Tell me why," said the Italian, rising to his feet like a commanding genius.

"Because I saw her clasped in the arms of a stranger. Her lips were pressed to his lips. I fled from her never to return."

"Do you know who that stranger was?" said Ruffini.

"No. I cared not to know. I fled from my disgrace in order that I might not sully the two"

"That stranger was her brother from the army of Italy," said Ruffini.

"Do you know this?" inquired the appalled owner of millions.

"I ought to know it," said the Italian. "He was my brother and she was my sister."

The false hair and beard of Ruffini were thrown aside in a moment. There stood the mighty chief of the Provviditori, with whose name and exploits all Italy had once rung. The patriot was older than when he had eased the form of Major Laurens upon the rack in an Austrian dungeon. The silver threads of age had stolen into his black hair, and time had not lightly laid its transforming fingers upon his brow.

But there he stood, the soldier of Italy. Nicholas Rudd knew him.

"Give me intelligence of the woman I have wronged," he gasped out. "My whole life has been worse than useless. I have condemned the innocent, and I loved her with my whole soul."

The answer, solemn and majestic, came from the brother and went through the veins of the aged banker like electric fire.

"She is dead!"

(To be continued.)

THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT.

CHAPTER XI.

As a very great favor Mr. Jobbs occasionally permitted Caspar to bring his sister with him to the warehouse to spend the day. The little thing was perfectly quiet, watching everything that went on with her large, surprised blue eyes. The saleswomen, on these rare occasions, petted her, and when she fell asleep would take her into an upper room and make a bed of shawls for her where she could take a comfortable nap.

One of these girls found out that Minna had a wonderful eye for colour, and accordingly set her to work sorting sewing silks. By the hour together her busy little fingers were employed in separating the different shades, and she never made a mistake.

These were halcyon days for our little waifs, but Mr. Jobbs put an end to them.

The child's wardrobe was getting shabby—a fact the more palpable from the miserable way in which the poor little thing darned and patched her own clothes.

"Number Five," said Mr. Jobbs, "unless your sister can dress better she can't come here no more. She looks like a beggar-child. Number Five, I begin to be suspicious of you. I pay you liberal, and yet both of you are dressed like scarecrows. I'm afraid you tittle, I'm afraid you gamble, I'm afraid you smoke cigars on the sly!"

Caspar shook his head mournfully, and the tears stood in his eyes.

"Well, well, I'll try you a little longer," said Mr. Jobbs; "but your sister can't come here no more. Cash Number Five, make haste! don't you hear 'em calling of you?"

Matters went on in this way a little longer. One evening Mr. Jobbs came in very red in the face. He walked to the farther end, and, turning round, called out, in a stentorian voice:

"Cash Number Five!"

Caspar answered his call promptly.

"Foller me!" cried Mr. Jobbs, fiercely.

The boy followed him into a little back room, where there were a writing-desk, a table, and a couple of shelves holding a dictionary and some old almanacs. This Mr. Jobbs called his "library." He had heard that Mr. Stewart, the prince of merchants, was a classical scholar, and so he gave out that he himself was "literary."

"Boy!" he said, with such an enormous emphasis that the word seemed as big as a full moon, "look me full in the eye."

He hung his thumbs in the armholes of his vest, and surrendered his optics to the inspection of the trembling lad. "Do you see anything green there?"

Caspar was too unfamiliar with slang to understand the meaning of the question.

"I don't understand you, sir," he faltered.

"I've stood you about long enough," said Mr. Jobbs. "I've given you fair warning. That air new suit of clothes you promised was fictitious. But I stood that. What's happened this evening is the extra feather on the camel's back. I sever the connection—I discharge you. Never more be cash-boy of mine! It is now Thursday. Legally you are only entitled to ten shillings, but nobody never had no right to say that Jacob Jobbs was mean. I make you a present of six shillings. There's sixteen shillings! Go; never on no pretence come inside my doors. If you do—there's a law agin vagrancy, and policemen to enforce it."

"Discharged!" cried Caspar, bursting into tears.

"Oh! what will become of us!"

"If you want me to indicate a line of life at once idle and profitable," said Mr. Jobbs, with a sneer, "I should say follow your sister's example—take up her trade—beg in the streets."

"What do you mean, sir?" cried Caspar, his face turning scarlet. "My little sister beg! Some one has imposed on you."

"Oh! the depravity of boy nature! Oh, the brass of juvenile delinquency!" cried Mr. Jobbs, rolling up his eyes. "Do you mean to tell me that your sister—even more precocious than yourself—isn't a common street beggar?"

"I do!" cried Caspar, clenching his hands. "And I say that whoever has told you this infamous story speaks falsely."

"Why, you brazen young scamp," roared Mr. Jobbs, "do you mean to deny the evidence of my own senses when she begged of me this very night—when she stood out on the pavement barefooted and held out her hand to me and whined for a penny? She didn't know me—but I knowed her fast enough."

Caspar staggered as if he had been shot, and moved toward the door.

"By thunder!" thought Mr. Jobbs, "what an actor he'd make! he hasn't spent his money at the theatre for nothing—he hasn't. Here," he called out, "you're leaving your money."

Caspar took the money meekly.

"Heaven bless you, Mr. Jobbs," he said, "for what you've done for me—and forgive you for misjudging me."

Then he passed through to the street. Sympathising looks were turned on him by the salesmen and customers, for they all liked him, but they dared not take a kind leave of him, for the great man stood at the end of the warehouse watching them, and frowning when his eye lit on the retreating figure of "Cash Boy Number Five."

Caspar walked toward his lodgings like one in a dream.

He had lost his situation and he did not know what would become of him. Of course he knew that Mr. Jobbs had been mistaken in the person of the child that had begged of him—but the thought gave him little satisfaction.

The corner of the street was as light as day. As he drew near he saw a little barefooted girl of the age and figure of Minna go up to a lady timidly, pull the skirt of her dress and hold out her tiny hands for charity.

"There," thought Caspar, "it would be very easy in the night time to mistake that child for Minna. I have a good mind to take that little beggar right back to the warehouse and confront her with Mr. Jobbs."

The lady gave the child some money, glanced at her pityingly, and then walked on, leaning on her husband's arm.

Caspar ran up to the child—but what was his horror when he recognized Minna herself!

"Oh, Caspar! I'm so glad to see you!" cried little Minna.

"Quick! give me the money the lady gave you," cried Caspar.

"I must give it to Mr. Baumann," said the child, trembling.

"No—to me, darling, at once. And wait here till I come back."

The little girl unditched her hand, gave Caspar a penny piece, and he sped up the street like a deer. Overtaking a lady and gentleman, he pulled off his cap and said:

"Madam, you just gave this money to a little girl. It was a mistake—she is no beggar. I am her brother."

The lady looked surprised.

"Well, my lad," she said, "keep it and buy sweetmeats for the child with it."

"Excuse me, madam, we cannot take gifts from strangers."

The lady received the coin, and Caspar hastened back to find his sister. She was sitting on a doorstep shivering, for the night was sharp and her delicate feet were bare.

"How long has this been going on, darling?" asked Caspar, sitting down beside her. "How long have you been out in the streets, barefooted, asking people for money?"

"Mr. Baumann said I mustn't tell you," said the little girl, with a frightened look. "He said if I did he'd beat me."

"He wouldn't dare to."

"Yes, Caspar, dear, he has shaken me and beaten me when the people wouldn't give me any money to take to him."

Caspar was so convulsed with passion and grief that he was speechless.

"Hullo! what are you doing there?" cried a hoarse but not unkindly voice.

It proceeded from the lips of the overgrown boy who was known as Jim, and whom Caspar had met several times before.

"Jim," said Caspar, "I found my little sister hivering with cold and begging in the street."

"Well, wot of it? It's a good trade, if the cops only let you alone. She'll get hardened like in time and paddle about in the puddles like a duck. Rainy nights is the best. When I was on that lay myself I sometimes collared a good deal of a stormy evening. I didn't mind the weather a bit, but I done the ager-shakes to a dot."

"You were brought up to it. We've seen better days—had a kind father and mother, and rich uncles in Germany."

"Oh! I see," said Jim. "I've heard tell of fathers and mothers—though them I know mostly beats their kids and sends 'em out in the streets to beg or steal—so that naturally I hain't much respect for the institution, and rather flatters myself that I was lucky in being a foundlin'. But I say the gal is cold and shivering."

The boys lifted up Minna, whose head was now sleepily nodding, and Jim lent his rugged but warm woolen coat to wrap her up in. Caspar carried the child. At the head of the cellar steps he returned the overcoat with thanks.

"Are you going down?" he asked.

"Not just yet," replied Jim. "There's a cove down there lushing what I don't care to see just now. I'll look about here till he's gone."

Minna was now awake, and Caspar, setting her on her feet, led her down the stone steps into the cellar.

It was a sort of festival in the "dive." Two extra lamps were blazing and smoking. The tables were full, and a blind fiddler was rasping a violin with great energy and little skill. Mrs. Blossom wore a cap with ribbons as frilly as her face.

A waitress was serving the customers with various villainous drinks, always paid for beforehand. Foul pipes and cheap cigars made the atmosphere venomous.

Bastian was seated with a tumbler of hot whisky before him. His one touch of delirium tremens had been a lesson to him, but had not converted him to total abstinence. Within certain fixed limits he still indulged very freely.

There was something in the boy's look as he led Minna into the inner room that cowed the man for a moment. Caspar put his sister to bed, and waited till her feet were warmed and she had fallen asleep. Then he came out into the public room and walked straight up to Bastian.

"How dare you," he asked, "to send my little delicate sister out into the streets to beg?"

"From sheer necessity, Master Caspar. To get bread for us."

"To buy whisky for you," retorted Caspar, pointing to the steaming glass that stood before Bastian.

"Hear that," cried the man, appealing to the company. "Hear this ungrateful viper!"

"Ungrateful!" retorted Caspar. "You know this is false. You know that I've been slaving for you, and brought you every shilling of my wages. Here! here's the money—the last you will get, for Mr. Jobbs has discharged me."

"Then you've neglected your duty, you vagabond!"

"It is false," retorted Caspar. "He discharged me because he said he wouldn't have a beggar's brother in his warehouse. Take the money," he added, fiercely, as he flung it on the table. "That squares our cash accounts. But there's another to settle."

"It doesn't square our cash accounts," said Bastian. "Remember that I brought you across the water, and have been paying your bills for months."

"Gentlemen," said the boy, appealing to the crowd, "we are children of prosperous parents. Our uncles are rich, and sent us over in charge of this man to seek our parents; but they are dead."

"Here's a uncle that ain't particularly rich, young gentleman—not exactly," said a tipsy toper, laying his hand on Bastian's shoulder.

"Our relatives are wealthy," said the boy. "Now I put it to you, gentlemen. Is it likely that they sent us away empty-handed, leaving this man to pay all our charges?"

"It's more than likely, young Cleoro," said a stout, black-bearded man, who had been a listener, "that he had money for you in his hands, and has made a good thing out of it. Baumann ain't no fool."

Bastian turned fiercely on the speaker, but his glance was retorted with interest.

He turned to Caspar.

"No more of this," he said. "Go to bed."

"I will not," said Caspar.

"He's a game chicken," muttered the black-bearded man.

"You have dared," continued the boy—"you have dared, coward, scoundrel that you are, to lay your hand on my little sister."

"It is false, if she said so," stammered Bastian.

"She never told a falsehood!" retorted Caspar, and, spring forward in uncontrollable fury, he struck his enemy with all his might full in the face.

The blow was so well aimed and delivered that the man reeled and fell heavily from his chair.

Instantly springing to his feet he made for the boy like a tiger.

But Caspar, now frantic with righteous passion, seized a glass bottle by the neck and shivered it over Bastian's head, cutting him badly and wounding his own hand.

"Bravo!" said the black-bearded man, springing to his feet. "I said he was a game chicken."

Bastian had friends and foes among those present.

Some of the former made for the boy, some of the latter, including the black-bearded man, took his part.

All the guests, maddened with whisky, were ripe for a row, and a fierce fight ensued.

There was but one cool head in the crowd. Jim had been listening and watching at the head of the stairs till the windy quarrel came to blows.

Darting down, he extricated Caspar from the melee and whispered:

"After what's happened there's only one thing for you to do—out your lucky. That man will be the death of you—the police will cut in, and maybe you'll have to go to quod."

"And Minna?"

"I'll look out for her."

He darted into the inner room, caught up the sleeping child, bedclothes and all, and dashed up the stone steps, followed by Caspar.

"Quick, now," he said, "otherwise the cops will pin us for sneak thieves."

"I don't know where to lay my head to-night," said Caspar.

"I don't," replied Jim. "You want to keep out of the clasp of that man?"

"Yes."

"To hide—anywhere so's he can't find you?"

"Yes—death rather than fall into his clutches."

"Then come along—that's all. I'll take you to a place what's more secret than the grave."

CHAPTER XII.

Jim was as good as his word. He piloted his young friends down the street to the river side, always giving the policemen, or "cops," as he called them, a wide berth.

Diving through a passage-way, Jim handed Caspar and Minna down on a slippery, slimy, floating stage.

"Now you must mind your eyes, young uns," he said. "If you was to fall into the water it would be hard work to fish you out ag'in. A good many does fall in and is drowned—some on 'em pushed in. I've seed that done."

Crawling along the slippery planks, he paused.

"Now," said he, "you must be wonderful careful, for here we've got to walk some spars. Round walkin' is a sight harder than square walkin' till you gets use to it."

He turned at right angles, and they all three trod warily along a floating spar, steadying themselves against the side of the pier.

"Now keep still," said the guide.

He tapped on a plank, which was slid aside, and some words passed between him and a person unseen.

"Tell her they're friends of mine," Caspar heard Jim say.

After a few moments Jim said to the boy:

"Siddy, now, and hand the gal along. Are you ready there the other side? All right. Now then."

Little Minna, who was half asleep, was pushed through a narrow aperture and received by a person on the other side.

"Now, my bosom friend," said Jim, addressing Caspar, "follow me. I've made it all right."

He crawled through the opening in the side of the pier and Caspar followed him, alighting on a sloppy, muddy footing.

Jim closed the entrance and made the little fugitives welcome to a nest of dock rats.

It was occupied by half a dozen boys, some of tender years, others, like Jim himself, verging on manhood. Tattered demotions they were—human vermin, outcasts and outlaws, thieves every one, without an exception. And this filthy den, floored with mud and littered with foul straw, was their home.

There was a cylinder stove in one corner, from the open door of which came a dull red light. There was also a tallow candle stuck in a bottle set on the floor, by the light of which four of the dock rats were playing cards. It seemed impossible to believe that any of these poor outcasts had ever had fathers and mothers—it seemed more natural to suppose that they had sprung up like toadstools from the poisonous soil on which they vegetated.

Caspar stood holding Minna by the hand and gazing in dismay on the strange scene.

"Won't somebody offer the young lady and gentleman a chair?" asked one of the cardplayers, a



[THE DOCK RATS' NEST.]

sally which provoked a burst of very low laughter, for noise was forbidden in this secret den.

"This here boy and girl is my friends. This young man is at present in difficulties—he's been walloping his guarden, which he done in skientifio tyle. I seed him. He's big enough to take keer of himself, having been early taught by his thoughtful parients to put up his hands. And I hereby give him leave, by these presents, to put a head on any chap wot violates the laws of hospitallity. As for this little gal, she's under my special charge, and if any one so much as looks hard at her I'll be down on him like a thousand er bricks."

"Aperiently," said one of them, who was nicknamed Mackerel Joe, "the gentleman speaks as if he was captain of this gang. If I am right in my konjekturs, I should like to know at what meeting he was chose. But if he has not been chose I should advise him most respectfully to dry up."

"I'll shet you up, Mackerel, very soon," cried Jim, advancing to the critic.

"Silence!" cried a voice. "Don't you know that I have forbidden quarrelling and brawling here?"

The boys were instantly silent, and turned their faces to the quarter from which the warning had come.

A calico curtain, which concealed a recess, had been lifted aside, and under its folds stood a girl of sixteen, swarthy in hue, but withal singularly beautiful.

She must have had gipsy blood in her veins, for her features were those of the wild Zingara.

Night black was the hair which was coiled round her head in snaky folds, crowned by a sort of crimson turban. Night black were her eyes, fringed with long silken lashes. Her arms were bare to the shoulder, and muscular, through symmetrical. Her shapely feet, with high-arched insteps, were bare.

She wore a simple robe of some saffron-coloured stuff girt to her slender waist by a scarlet sash, into which was thrust a cruel-looking Spanish knife.

It was strange to see such a flower of beauty flourishing in this rank, polluted soil.

Caspar gazed on her wonder-stricken.

She appeared to him like some fairy of romance coming into an enchanter's cave to rescue her favourites from the spell of their evil genius.

She beckoned the German boy and girl to her, led them into the inner recess, and dropped the curtain, first pausing to say:

"Jim, you will get supper for us. You're not on river duty to-night."

The recess was floored rudely with boards, was furnished with a few low wooden stools, had a coarse

deal table, some toilet articles, and two or three shake-downs or ticks filled with straw. Compared with the outer place, it was palatial in its appointments.

She gave the boy and girl seats, and took one herself, eyeing them curiously as their faces were revealed by a solitary candle stuck in a brass candlestick.

Observing that both of the children clung to each other, uneasy and trembling, the girl said:

"You needn't be afraid, nobody will harm you here. Those rude boys are afraid of me, and obey me. My name is Mabel—no other name. You can call me Mabel when you speak to me. Now, my little fellow, speak up and tell me why you are in hiding—what your trouble is."

Caspar told in his artless way all that happened to him on this eventful evening—his dismissal—his finding his sister begging—his quarrel and fight with Bastian, or Baumann as he called himself—and their running away.

The girl listened intently. At certain points in the narrative her eyes emitted lurid flashes, and she clutched the handle of her belted knife. At other moments her stern expression softened into almost a tender look. However degraded she might be, it was evident that she had not lost all the tender traits of womanhood.

"This man has never written to your uncle," she said, decidedly. "Can you write?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am," replied Caspar.

"To-morrow morning you shall write home. I have the materials here, and will see that your letter is stamped and put in the post office. In about a fortnight at farthest you will get an answer. Tell your people just to address you in London. You will find their letter in the general post office. You are hungry?"

"We have had no supper."

"Can I come in?" asked a voice on the other side of the curtain.

"Yes, Jim—yes," answered Mabel.

Jim pushed his way under the curtain, bearing a tray on which were a beefsteak, done to a turn, and an old tin coffee-pot, from which ascended a savory steam.

From a rude cupboard Mabel produced some cracked cups, iron spoons, knives and forks, tin plates, etc., and set the table. Invited to join the supper party, Jim accepted with alacrity.

"Ah!" said he, rubbing his dirty hands, "this is a supper for an alderman, though I says it. You won't get no milk, young nas—our cow's dry, and sent to pasture. But this here coffee is first rate—we imports it express—gets it afore it's mixed with beans."

He heaped the plates of his guests and set the example of eating voraciously.

When they had nearly finished their meal Mabel started.

"Did you hear that?" she asked.

"Yes," answered Jim, with his mouth full. "I heard a pistol-shot."

"What do you think it was?"

"I think it was a watchman practising with his revolver on dock rats," he answered, giving her a peculiar look.

"Go and see," said the girl, imperiously.

Jim was gone a long time. When he came back he whispered in Mabel's ear, but not so low that Caspar did not catch the words:

"It was Mossbunker, but he's more skeered than hurt; got his starboard flipper barked with a blue pill. I've bound it up with a rag soaked into turpentine—you'd orter seen him squirm when it touched him—and he'll be all right in the morning. Not much swag, though—box of raisins and a keg of cognac."

"You can go," said the girl, nodding her head, and Jim vanished, not to reappear again that night.

What he had heard alarmed Caspar. It is true that the information that Jim had conveyed to Mabel was couched in unintelligible slang, but he gathered enough to be certain that the outcasts among whom his lot had cast him and his little sister were engaged in nefarious transactions. Had he escaped one peril to fall into another even more deadly?

"What will become of us poor children?" he thought. Then he remembered there was one who was a father to the fatherless, and to him he knelt in prayer.

Mabel, the "Queen of the Dock Rats," as she was called by her admirers and followers, watched the boy, at first in scornful wonder, and then her bosom heaved, and tears came into her eyes.

"He can pray," she thought. "I never was taught to pray. Yet what good has his piety done him? He is thrust forth, a penniless outcast, more destitute than we are, for he has no resource, and we know how to steal."

The poor wild creature could not see the hand of Providence that smoothed a pillow for the innocent children even in a den of thieves, and moved the hearts of these degraded beings to pity.

But her better nature was roused, and she did her best to make the beds she prepared for the boy and girl comfortable. Both of them were soon sound asleep, and then Mabel extinguished the light, and wrapping a horse-rag round her threw herself upon her bed of straw.

(To be continued.)



[DEEP WATER.]

THE FAMILY DIAMONDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Marigold," "Breaking the Charm," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

My good Lyander,
I swear to thee by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus's doves
And all that knitteth souls and prospers loves.
Shakespeare.

MR. SWORDARM, professor of the art of fencing, was a rough, blunt, but withal dapper little man of middle age, intensely practical and prosaic. He did not live very happily with his wife, who was young, handsome and romantic. In her favourite novels she found ideal characters who contrasted unfavourably for her husband, he suffering by the comparison, and after two years of wedded life she made the unhappy discovery that comes like a revelation of doom to many wives that she did not and never could love and esteem her husband, their tastes being thoroughly uncongenial, for while she was soft, loving, sentimental and confiding he was exactly the reverse and ridiculed her ideas instead of sympathizing with them.

Lord Sunderland had for some time been a pupil of Swordarm, and during his visits to the fencing academy he had made the acquaintance of the professor's pretty wife, a flirtation had sprung up between them, and the lady often sighed as she thought of the elegant, refined and accomplished young nobleman, who was so different from her husband.

Mr. Swordarm was one morning walking about his academy with his leathern waistcoat on, foil in hand, lunging at invisible pupils and putting himself in various eccentric attitudes required by the exigencies of the sword exercise.

His wife was sitting in an arm-chair near the fireplace reading a book in which she was much interested. Looking up, she exclaimed:

"What a delightful author this is. Listen to a charming passage, my dear. Edwin is in love with Angelina and he says—"

"Bother Edwin," interrupted Mr. Swordarm. "I wish people would keep their appointments. Here have I been waiting a full hour for a young guardsmen, who has not had the civility to send a messenger with an apology for his want of punctuality. However, I shall charge him in the bill for the lesson, whether he has it or not."

"That is just like you," exclaimed his wife, with a deep and prolonged sigh. "You are all business. There is no communion between us."

"If I did not look after business I should like to know what would become of us, and it would be more to your credit, madam, to see to the dinner than to be wasting your time over that trash."

Closing the book, Mrs. Swordarm walked disdainfully out of the room without favouring her husband with a reply.

"There is a woman for you," exclaimed the irate professor, "ornamental but not useful. Wants her opera box and her carriage. She should not have married a poor man. Give me hands and heads before faces, if marriage is to be happy. Who's that? Come in."

There was a knock and directly afterwards the door opened, giving admittance to Mr. Deepwater, who as an old pupil was well known to Swordarm.

"Good-morning, sir. Glad to see you," exclaimed the professor. "I am very much at your service if you wish to have a bout with the foils."

"No, thank you," replied Deepwater. "I have come with a very different object in view."

"What may that be?"

"I wish to put you on your guard."

"Against whom?" asked the professor, not a little astonished.

"A titled scoundrel. There is a plot on foot to undermine your happiness, Swordarm, and I felt I should not be doing my duty if I did not warn you in time."

The professor wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

"I have known you some time, sir," he exclaimed, "and I take it kindly of you to interest yourself in my welfare. In what quarter does this danger lie?"

"You have a wife, Swordarm!"

The little man started as if a snake had stung him, for though rough and almost unkind in his manner to his wife he loved her in his heart, and it was a peculiarity in his nature to be profoundly jealous.

"Your wife is faithless to you," continued Deepwater. "I can bring you proof. You have a pupil, Lord Sunderland is the man to whom I allude. He is the snake in the grass. Read this letter, which I was entrusted with a few days ago."

Swordarm with trembling hand received a letter from Deepwater, and while a mist swam before his eyes read:

"May a devoted admirer of your dazzling beauty expect you this evening at the old place? Your presence brings happiness, your absence misery to your loving S."

The letter was a forgery cleverly executed by Deepwater, but the writing being a good imitation of his lordship's the jealous professor was easily im-

posed upon, and trembled in every limb with passion.

Deepwater's object was to prevent in some way Lord Sunderland's marriage with Miss Venner, as he had determined to marry her himself, if human means could accomplish his end.

Knowing the irritable nature of Swordarm, he felt sure that something of a tragic nature would ensue as the result of his plot.

"Sir," exclaimed the professor, shaking his hand warmly, "you have deeply wounded me, because you have attacked my honour. But I thank you nevertheless. For you have shown me the gulf of infamy near which I have been standing with my eyes shut for so long a time."

"Do nothing rash," said Deepwater.

"Probably his lordship will come to-day," continued the professor, musingly. "The villain, the doubled-dyed villain to rob me of the affections of my wife. I wonder if a man like that thinks his title-privileges him to go about undermining the peace of simple citizens like myself? If the button was to slip off the end of my foil and he fell wounded while taking a lesson would the law touch me?"

"Certainly not," replied Deepwater, hastily catching at this muttered suggestion. "It would be a pure accident."

"But it would look very much like assassination."

"Not at all. Revenge yourself, my friend, upon this insolent nobleman. Do not hesitate," urged Deepwater.

There was another knock at the door.

The professor ran and looked through a wicket.

"It is he," he cried, excitedly. "Lord Sunderland is here. Hide yourself, sir. You must not meet."

Deepwater looked round him hurriedly, and seeing a cupboard in which foils and gloves were kept he quickly concealed himself within it, leaving the door ajar, so that he might see what happened.

The next moment the professor had admitted his lordship, who with a pleasant smile on his handsome face held out his hand, saying:

"How do, Swordarm? I have come to while away an hour. Get out the foils. What, won't you shake hands with an old pupil?"

"Excuse me, my lord, I have cut my finger and the least pressure is painful. Did your lordship ask for the foils?" answered the professor.

"Yes. If you are not engaged. I thought I heard voices as I knocked."

"Only my wife, my lord, who was speaking to me."

The professor darted a quick, searching glance at

his visitor as he spoke and observed him visibly change colour.

"Ah," said Lord Sunderland, who could not forget that he had kissed Mrs. Swordarm and squeezed her hand on more than one occasion. "How is your charming wife?"

"Not very well, my lord. This is your foil, I think. On guard, Sir!"

His lordship took the foil and placed himself on guard, having removed his coat and slipped on a leathern jerkin or waistcoat.

At the same moment Swordarm, who was dreadfully pale and tremulous, pulled the button from the end of his foil, making it into a tolerably sharp-pointed sword.

"Now, my lord," he said, "let us see you show yourself a master of the art of fence. One, two, three. So! well parried! A pretty thrust in curve. Well parried again. Ah, that lunge in fence has you. No. Again. So! Ah, I have you now. Good Heavens. What is that? Can the business have fallen off my foil?"

With a groan his lordship sank upon the padded floor, the blood oozing from a wound he had received.

He made no answer when spoken to and seemed to have fainted.

Deepwater, having witnessed the catastrophe, emerged from his place of concealment.

"I will send you a doctor," he exclaimed, in a low voice. "Let us hope that the hurt is fatal, for then you will have avenged your injured honour."

"What have I done?" asked the professor, who now that his jealous rage was over was rather alarmed at seeing his lordship's favourite form stretched out in front of him and lying in a pool of blood.

"You have proved yourself a man. Not a word. Keep your own counsel. Be cautious."

With these words Deepwater hurriedly quitted the fencing academy, called a passing cab and drove to a doctor's, requesting the physician to attend a wounded man at Professor Swordarm's, and then went on to Mrs. Burgoyne's house, where he hoped to find Miss Venner at home.

Nor was he mistaken in his expectation. She was within and at once agreed to receive him, though in her heart, as we already know, she had no liking for the crafty and designing adventurer.

The governess was reclining negligently upon an ottoman, and beneath the folds of her loose morning wrappers her tiny feet were displayed with just the least suspicion of coquetry.

Inclining her head to her visitor, she said:

"I have admitted you, Mr. Deepwater, to inform you once for all that your visits are not agreeable to me, and to request that you will cease in future to call upon me."

"I have brought you important news," he answered.

"Of what nature?"

"Lord Sunderland is dead or dying. He met with an accident in a fencing school this morning, the button slipped off his antagonist's foil, and he was pierced by the weapon."

Miss Venner turned pale, for her ambitious dreams seemed likely to turn out unsubstantial visions.

"How do you know this?" she asked, in a tremulous voice.

"I was present."

"I cannot thank you for your information," she said, recovering herself by an effort of her iron will, for she would not have betrayed any weakness before this man for worlds. "You know that his lordship has honoured me by an offer of his hand and name. I will hope that he may recover, and if my care and attention can lead toward so desirable a result they shall not be wanting. Having acquitted yourself of your amiable mission, Mr. Deepwater, may I ask you to leave me?"

He bit his lips, but did not move.

"Surely a lady in her own house may express a wish to be alone?" she continued.

"Certainly. But allow me to urge my suit. I know the time is not favourable," replied Deepwater. "Yet when a man loves so passionately as I love you he cannot stand upon trifles."

"My love is not to be envied," she exclaimed. "It is the love that kills. Those who love me are sure to be unfortunate, but you need not fear for yourself. I can never regard you with affection. Leave me."

"By Heaven, I will not!" he rejoined. "You shall hear me. If you will not meet me as a friend and lover you shall know me as an enemy!"

"Very well, sir, as an enemy be it," exclaimed Miss Venner, rising with dignity and placing her hand upon the bell.

"What would you do?" he asked, fiercely.

"Summon my servants to teach you that civility which you seem to have forgotten."

"Beware!" he hissed fiercely through his clenched teeth.

He advanced towards her threateningly. What he would have said or done it is difficult to imagine, but the scene was cut short by the opening of the door and the appearance of Lord Sunderland, whose left arm was in a sling of black silk.

He was very pale, and seemed weak and ill, but with firm purpose displayed in his face he advanced to Deepwater.

"Get. Leave this house, sir! Your presence is an insult."

"What do you mean?" asked Deepwater, as nervously as if he had been confronting a ghost risen from the grave. "This house is not yours, my lord."

"No matter. I am now acquainted with your true character. Swordarm has confessed all. I heard your remarks while I laid upon the floor, faint from the pain of my wound. Fortunately the foil only punctured my arm and my life is spared. Go, sir. You are my enemy. Do not linger or I may be tempted, wounded as I am, to resort to violence."

Hanging down his head as he felt himself defeated, Deepwater stalked from the room, muttering threats which were inaudible.

When he was gone Miss Venner assisted his lordship to the sofa, for he staggered with faintness.

"I am so pleased to see you," she exclaimed. "That man told me you were dead or dying, and had the insolence to ask for my love at such a moment."

"It is not his fault that I am alive," answered Lord Sunderland; "he told Swordarm a wicked story about his wife and me, which had little or no foundation, but I am glad now to know what a viper I have been cherishing."

"Are you much hurt, dearest?" asked Miss Venner, looking up tenderly into his face.

"No. In a week or two I shall be well again. This will not interfere with our marriage, sweet one, which shall take place in a month as arranged. Listen to me tales that may be told you. Beware above all things of jealousy."

"Nothing you may have done before you told me you loved me," replied Miss Venner, "will affect me in the slightest degree. I have no right to inquire into your former life. Be satisfied that I love you, dearest, too fondly to allow anything to separate us."

Pleading indisposition, his lordship, after renewing his vows, left the object of his adoration and returned home. He had a little overtaxed his strength in seeking her, but he felt an instinctive dread of Deepwater and was unable to rest until he had seen her.

When alone Miss Venner thought of her captives in the Lone Tower.

"They must die," she murmured.

This was uttered with the solemnity of a decree of fate. She had thoroughly outgrown her girlish passion for Frank Burgoyne, whom she despised now as much as she had formerly loved him.

Both he and Agnes were now an encumbrance of which she wished to rid herself as quickly as she might.

So after lingering in town long enough to know that Lord Sunderland was entirely out of danger she went into the country and sought the Lone Tower, her heart steeled against pity, only thinking of the happiness in store for her with his lordship and feeling ashamed of the weakness that had once made her dare and do so much to gain a love which she now trampled upon as worse than worthless.

CHAPTER XX.

World, world; oh, world.

But that thy strange mutations make us hate

the

Life would not yield to age. Shakespeare.

It was a wild and stormy night.

Rain fell at intervals, and the rugged clouds, chased by the boisterous wind, obscured the surface of the moon, so that it was difficult to traverse the country lanes which led from the railway station to the Lone Tower.

But Miss Venner was not to be deterred by obstacles. She had purposely timed her arrival from London at a late hour, so that she might avoid observation, and though the walk through the mud and rain was not agreeable to one delicately nurtured as she had been, and in spite of the injury her rich attire received, she resolutely tramped along until she reached the secluded property of which she was owner.

The dog bayed in the courtyard at her approach, but was instantly quiet when he heard her voice, and whined pitiously in reply to her caress.

It seemed as if the whine of the hound foreboded some misfortune.

Pushing open the door leading to the domestic offices, in which her old servant Isabella lived, she was surprised to see the woman stretched upon the

floor, and a moment's examination showed her to be dead.

There were no marks of violence upon her person, and the only conclusion that Miss Venner could come to was that she had expired from old age.

Walking hastily along, the prey of an indescribable agitation, she came to the library, which she knew was the favourite haunt of Frank Burgoyne.

To her delight she saw him sitting moodily in a chair, a lamp with a shade over it was near him, but the book he had been reading had fallen from his hands.

At her approach he looked up.

"Ah, is it you?" he cried. "You have come in time. To-morrow I should have been far away. I am the only living occupant of this Tower. The old woman is dead, and early in the morning I meant to have set fire to the building in which I have suffered so much."

"You have not dared to remove Agnes?" said Miss Venner, who thought him completely crushed and in her power, owing to the thralldom she exercised over him through his being a fugitive from justice.

"What do I care for your threats now?" he answered, wildly. "You have tried to render my Agnes odious in my sight, but hideous as she may be to all eyes but mine she will never be a tithe so repulsive as you are. It is the deformity of moral character which is always more detestable than any bodily imperfection."

"What have you done with her?" inquired Miss Venner, trembling with suppressed rage.

"That is my business. It is enough for you to know that I have found her an asylum, where your spite and venomous hatred can never reach her."

Dissembling her passion, which was devouring her, she said:

"Frank, have you forgotten that you are my husband? It is your duty to love me."

"Love is a matter of heart, not of mind," he answered. "You have ruined me by your fatal liking. You know I never had any affection for you. How different might my fate have been had you never crept into our family, like a serpent as you are."

"But knowing that Agnes is disfigured for life, that I can transport you, and that you are my husband, why do you look so strangely upon me, as if you are bent upon defying and driving me to extremities?"

"You read my face well," he rejoined.

"Is there so much hatred in your heart for me, Frank?" she inquired.

His manner alarmed her.

She remembered that she was in the Lone Tower by herself with him.

The old woman was dead, there were no neighbours within miles, and her life was in his hands if in a sudden occasion of frenzy he chose to make any attempt upon it.

"What mercy can you expect from me?" he muttered. "By coming here to-night you have tempted fortune. To-morrow I should have been far away. But revenge is sweet. I shall not be the first man who has killed his wife."

"Killed!" she repeated, shrinking back, terrified.

"Surely, Frank, you have taken leave of your senses—you cannot mean what you say."

"You have maddened me," he answered. "I have brooded over my wrongs and those of Agnes, in this solitude, until my character has been completely altered. Say your prayers, for in ten minutes you will die."

Miss Venner went very pale, her limbs trembled under her, and almost refused to support her weight. Frank Burgoyne's manner was so different to anything she had seen in him before that she was filled with dread of him, and blamed herself a thousand times over for venturing to the Lone Tower, where she was deprived of any assistance whatever.

Formerly he had been submissive, meek, humble, almost idiotic in his manner. A great change had come over him. The calm was past. Now he was prepared for action, or he would not have removed Agnes to a place of safety nor threatened her with death.

"Frank, Frank!" she sobbed as she fell at his feet, with hands stretched out in an attitude of supplication, "remember that you are a strong man, and I only a poor, weak woman."

"You have behaved like a fiend," he answered, firmly. "What harm had Agnes done to you that you should have conceived the idea of transforming her into the colour of a negress? I could forgive all the injury you have done me but never the harm you have inflicted on that poor child."

"Go your way, Frank, and let me go mine. I will never trouble you again," replied Miss Venner. "It was my love for you which made me do what I did."

"There is but one way," he exclaimed, after a moment's reflection, "by which you can save your life."

"Name it, and I will gladly comply with your wishes," she replied, eagerly.

"Tell me how I can restore Agnes to her original condition."

"I know not."

"From whom did you obtain the drug which darkened her skin?"

"From an Italian physician named Conti; but I am ignorant of his whereabouts. I tried to find him the other day and no one knew what had become of him."

"Conti," repeated Frank Burgoyne, as if making a note of the name.

"Oh, believe me, Frank, I am not deceiving you," she continued, still kneeling, suppliant-like, at his feet.

"I will give you another chance," he added. "Tell me where my family diamonds are."

"How can I tell you?" she replied. "Were they not stolen?"

"Yes, but you know who stole them, and it is my firm opinion that they are now in your possession. I have been in London lately."

"That is where you have taken Agnes," said Miss Venner, quickly.

"Breathe not her name. It is a pollution for so pure a creature's name to come from your lips," he replied, angrily. "Answer my questions truthfully, or by the sky above, you have not long to live."

"You dare not murder me."

"To do so would be to commit a righteous action," he replied, displaying a glittering Venetian dagger.

"This weapon is made of glass. When plunged into the body and broken off, close to the flesh it cannot be easily extracted, death must ensue even if assistance is at hand, but I need not fear any interference in my scheme of vengeance. When you are dead I will set fire to this den of wickedness, and the Lone Tower shall be your funeral pyre. I know you so well that I am sure no one knows of your coming here, and you have kept my existence such a profound secret that it would be impossible for any one to suspect me, more especially since your servant is dead."

The light burned dimly on the table and cast a funeral glare upon surrounding objects.

There was a wild, half-frenzied appearance about Frank Burgoyne which convinced Miss Venner that he was dreadfully in earnest.

Fate had turned the tables upon her, and she was in the power of the man whom she had considered a poor, weak, spiritless worm to be trodden out of sight at will.

Wishing to live, she resolved to make any compromise rather than tempt him further.

If she could only escape from the Lone Tower into which she had so imprudently ventured there were many ways of crushing him, so she began to fall in with his views.

"Spare my life, Frank," she exclaimed. "It is not brave to threaten a defenceless woman."

"You know my terms," he answered, sternly.

"Tell me where the family diamonds are, and you shall live."

"It is useless to trifle with you," she said. "The diamonds are in my possession, that is to say the bulk of them are; a few I have sold when I wanted money. The remainder you will find in my jewel-case in my bed-room at Mr. Burgoyne's house in London. Here is the key and there is my card with the address on it."

He snatched the key eagerly while his face flushed with triumph.

At last his father's bequest was coming to him.

"How did they fall into your hands?" he asked.

"My brother, who is a desperate character, stole them when I fixed the guillotine upon you. He hid them in a cave. I watched him go to his hiding-place, and I stole them from him."

"Where is he now?"

"In some penal settlement. I handed him over to the police."

"More business. A terrible reckoning will be required of you some day," he answered, adding: "For the present you will stay here. To-morrow night I will come down to give you your liberty. Bread and water are upon a side table, with that you must satisfy your wants for the present."

"Take me with you. Oh, do not leave me here alone. Perhaps you will never come back," she cried, piteously.

Rudely repulsing her, he passed out without replying, and locked the door closely behind him.

Then his footsteps were heard dying away in the distance.

"A narrow escape," replied Miss Venner, to herself. "But at what a price have I bought my life. The diamonds are no longer mine. Is my star de-

clining in brilliancy? I cannot believe it. The time for my career to close cannot have yet arrived. Oh, if I could but escape!"

She looked eagerly round the spacious apartment, but her own ingenuity had made any issue from it impossible.

The windows were securely barred, and a glance showed her that the thick door and patent lock would resist all her efforts to open it.

Throwing herself into a chair, she was the prey of bitter reflections.

It had never occurred to her that Frank would act so daringly as he had done, nor did she dream that he would remove Agnes from the prison.

To lose the great prize of the Burgoyne diamonds was to sink once more into poverty, and to allow Frank to be at large was to jeopardize her intended union with Lord Sandhurst.

She had been formally and legally married to Frank Burgoyne, and if she married again while he lived he could institute proceedings against her for bigamy.

True, he was also in danger, as he had forfeited his bail and neglected to appear at a criminal charge which her agent had conducted against him.

She hated Frank now as much as she had once loved him. Her girlish fancy had vanished. She saw when it was too late that she had deceived herself, and that he was not a man for a woman like her to waste her strong affection upon.

How she wished that she could see him lying dead at her feet, for then she could take her place in society as Lady Sandhurst, and forget the tormenting past.

Rising from her seat, she paced the room with all the fierce curset of a caged tigress.

Suddenly she placed her hands upon the door; it yielded to her pressure. What miracle was this?

A glance sufficed to show her that in his haste Frank Burgoyne had locked the door but omitted to close it previously.

"Saved!" she cried. "I may yet be in time. It is late, there will be no train to London until seven o'clock to-morrow morning. Frank cannot have money enough for a special train; but I have; he will probably sleep at an inn, and while he is dreaming of a rich and happy future I shall be travelling to town to thwart his ends."

Without an instant's hesitation she gained the Lone Tower, hastily walking to the station, not caring for the mud and wind and rain; though the blast blew her garments about and the rain fell heavily, they could not damp her ardour, nor did the state of the roads impede her progress.

In two hours she reached the station, which was an important one, and in a short time an engine and one carriage, forming what is called a special, were placed at her service.

As she passed the waiting-room she struck back, for lying on the chair was a form she knew too well. It was Frank Burgoyne, who was snatching a few hours' repose before the gray dawn brought with it the train for London.

Presently the train started, and Miss Venner gave herself up to reflections as sweet as those of a short time before had been bitter and hopeless. She was free. She had the start of Frank, and she had sufficient confidence in her own tact to think that she would defeat him.

Wholly unconscious of her departure, and thinking he had plenty of time, Frank journeyed by the slow morning train to town and leisurely proceeded to the address she had given him.

His object was to get possession of the diamonds and turn them into cash, which would make him rich. He intended to go abroad with Agnes and her father, first to avoid Miss Venner's vengeance, and secondly to seek the best medical skill for the unfortunate girl he loved so well, and who had been the victim of the governess's ingenuity.

When he reached the corner of the street in which Miss Venner was residing he heard a voice say, "That is the man," and two officers of the detective force in plain clothes approached him.

"What do you want with me?" he asked, starting as a hand was rudely laid upon his arm.

"We have a warrant for your arrest, Mr. Burgoyne," was the calm answer. "You were committed for trial on suspicion of robbing your employer but admitted to bail, which you forfeited."

Frank groaned.

"Am I always to be the plaything of fate?" he murmured, sadly.

"Here is a letter which a lady directed me to give you," said the officer.

Frank took the note and read:

"Miss Venner presents her compliments to Mr. Burgoyne and begs to remind him of the old proverb, 'He who saps with a certain personage should have a long spoon.' Miss Venner trusts that you will not find penal servitude very irksome and will

carefully preserve the precious heirlooms until she meets Mr. Burgoyne again, though she fears some long time must elapse before that undesirable event takes place."

"There is some mystery in this!" gasped the unfortunate man, from whose breast all hope died away. "No matter, I am resigned. Lead on, I will follow you without any resistance. It is useless to fight against fate."

He was dragged away, scarcely having the power to walk, and in a short time securely lodged in jail, Miss Venner's biting sarcasm eating its way into his very soul.

CHAPTER XXI.

Logo: How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees? Thou knowest we work by wit, and not by witchcraft. And wit depends on dilatory time. *Shakespeare.*

In a small house in Bloomsbury Frank Burgoyne had placed Agnes Waldon when he brought her from the Lone Tower.

The house was a lodging-house kept by his old friend Giles Merriles and his wife.

Giles, when we met him before, had an establishment which he called a private hotel in Jernyn Street, St. James's, but the world had not dealt kindly with Giles. His was too trusting and confiding a nature.

The gentlemen who stayed with him went away forgetting to pay their bills, and at last he was compelled to sell the lease of his house and go to a less ambitious part of the town.

He started again in Hart Street, Bloomsbury, and his confidence in human nature was not a bit shaken, nor did he lose any of his good nature and happy disposition.

He was always in difficulties and in a chronic state of County Court with his baker, his butcher and milkman, but he laughed at everything and contrived to pay them somehow.

Mr. and Mrs. Merriles had heard all about Agnes's story from Frank, and they treated her with the kindness that a daughter receives from parents.

Frank wished her to go to her father's house, but she would not consent to visit her relations until her skin resumed its ordinary hue, and as the change in her colour was the result of art and not of nature she did not despair of finding medical skill which would restore her to her original condition.

But doctor after doctor came to see her and was unable to do anything for her.

She wrote to her father without giving any address saying that she was well and would see him shortly, so as to alleviate the anxiety which she felt sure he must feel on her account.

The day on which Frank Burgoyne was again arrested through the machinations of Miss Venner was the day on which he had appointed to join her in town.

As the time passed on and he did not appear she grew very anxious; for she feared Miss Venner's evil disposition, and dreaded lest something might have happened to him.

She knew the whole of his sad history, how he had loved her, and had suffered through his faithfulness and Miss Venner's jealousy.

It was no secret to Agnes that Frank had been coerced into marrying the wicked and unprincipled governess, but she hoped that he would escape from her thralldom, and that when Miss Venner had met with her deserts she would be able to espouse the only man she ever loved, and of whose devotion she was convinced in spite of all.

As the day wore on and Frank did not come she became so agitated and ill that she could not rest in the house, so, putting on a thick veil which hid her hideous appearance from the gaze of passers by, she went out for a walk.

Near the door she met Giles Merriles, whose good-natured face was adorned with a smile as usual; he had just returned from business in the City, and when he saw Agnes he exclaimed:

"Good-evening miss! Has the squire arrived?"

"No," answered Agnes, "Mr. Burgoyne has not come yet, and I am so anxious that I felt obliged to take a little walk, though I am not going far."

"Nothing like it, my dear," replied Giles; "when things go contrary with me my wife always tells me to take a turn round the houses. Perhaps the squire has missed the train."

"Oh, no; something has happened to him, and I fear that dreadful governess perhaps has discovered my escape and revenged herself upon him. I did not wish him to go back to the Tower."

"But he was quite right, my dear young lady," said Giles. "Don't you remember he told us he thought he could find out through Miss Venner who had the family diamonds? Depend upon it he is all right. Nothing serious has taken place; he will be here shortly."

"Heaven grant it," sighed Agnes.
At this moment a man rushed up against Agnes. Giles gave him a push, saying:
"Hold up, sir. It's early to get tipsy. Don't you see the lady?"
The man recovered himself, and, leaning against the railing, answered:
"I'm not drunk, my friend."
"You are very much like it then, and I should call you a very good imitation of it," replied Giles, laughing.
The stranger spoke in a faint voice and did not seem possessed of much strength.
"I have not tasted food for twenty-four hours!" he exclaimed, "as I am a Christian. I am starving, and, as to beer or spirits, nothing of the sort has passed my lips."
"Poor man!" exclaimed Agnes, whose gentle heart always beat warmly for the distressed. "Take him into your house, Mr. Merriles; I will pay you for anything you give him."
"You want to insult me, Miss Waldon," replied Giles, smiling. "Did I ever send a poor fellow away from my door empty handed? As long as I've a crust left I'll share it with another who wants it more than myself."
Turning to the stranger, he added:
"Hold up, master; lay hold of my arm."
With some difficulty he got him to the house, and took him into the parlour, when he placed some cold meat, bread, and a glass of beer before him.
The man ate ravenously, and when he had finished Agnes put two half-crowns into his hand.
"There, my friend," she exclaimed, "is something to relieve your passing necessities. I am poor and in distress myself or I would give you more."
"Heaven bless you, young lady," exclaimed the stranger, who for the first time caught sight of her face, from which she had removed the thick veil she usually wore to conceal her ugliness.
He stared strangely at her, and then added:
"You have the appearance of an Indian, yet your voice and manners are European. It is curious that there should be such a strange combination. Pardon me for my impertinence in asking, miss, if you are from the East?"
"No. I am English," she replied.
"Your parents also?"
"Yes."
"How long have you been dark? Do not trifle with me. Your return to happiness may depend upon your being frank with me," said the stranger, with singular earnestness.
"Mine is a strange history," she answered. "I loved a gentleman dearly, but he was beloved by another woman, whose jealousy induced her to steal me from my friend, shut me up in a lonely tower, and force me to take a drug which in a short time reduced me to the state in which you find me."
"How odd are the ways of Providence!" exclaimed the stranger, "it was I who compounded and sold the medicine."
"You! Who and what are you?" cried Agnes.
"My name is Conti. I am an Italian refugee and possessed of a rare knowledge of chemistry."
"If you are acquainted with the poison which has made me hideous can it be possible that you know the antidote?"
"Perfectly well."
These words caused such an excitement in Agnes Waldon's breast that she fell fainting into a chair.
Giles Merriles danced about the room like a madman who could not restrain his transports.
"Never tell me that a good action is thrown away!" he exclaimed, joyfully. "If we had not relieved this poor man we should never have found out this secret. Do good whenever you can and don't be ashamed of it. That is my motto, and it is one that will see you right in the world. Hurrah! Only to think that I should have lived to see this day. Won't Master Frank be pleased, that is all! Hurrah!"
"In six weeks," said Conti, "I can make the young lady as white as snow by the agency of a preparation of arsenic only known to myself."
"Then you are my guest for that time and as long afterwards as you like. You shall live on the fat of the land and recline in the lap of luxury!" exclaimed Giles, who was waxing poetical.
"Oh," murmured Agnes. "If Frank would only come."
"I have much to answer for," remarked Conti. "But as your great poet says 'my poverty, not my will,' compelled me, and when the lady whose name I do not know offered me money to do as she told me I was too poor to refuse."
There was a loud single knock at the door.
Giles ran to open it and admitted a tall policeman, who said:
"Does Miss Waldon live here?"
"Yes. Step in," replied Giles.
The policeman, who was in uniform, entered the

room and Agnes's heart at once sank within her, for she guessed that he brought evil tidings.
"A letter for the lady," said the constable.
Giles handed it to Agnes, who with difficulty broke the envelope.
A moment sufficed to enable her to master its contents, then she said, in a voice broken by sobs:
"Frank is arrested again, through the malice of his enemy, Miss Venner. The old charge is brought against him, of which I know he is innocent, and he wants me to visit him in prison and see what can be done."
"Pardon me, miss," said Conti, who had been an attentive listener. "Did you say Frank?"
"Yes. Mr. Frank Burgoyne is my affianced and he is the victim of a cruel persecution at the hands of a wicked woman."
Conti rubbed his hands gleefully.
"This is an extraordinary night," he said. "I can clear Mr. Burgoyne's character and obtain his release."
"You!" cried Agnes.
"Yes. I was employed by the same lady who obtained the drug to darken your complexion to get up a charge of robbery against Mr. Frank Burgoyne, who was a clerk in a City bank. Ralph Hardacre is the thief, and I can prove it."
Giles began to dance again, making the most extraordinary antics.
"What a happy day we're having!" he exclaimed. "Sit down, Mr. Policeman. What will you take, sir? Put a name to it. We've got a little sixpence left yet."
"I thank Heaven," said Agnes, piously, "that I begin to see a happy issue out of all my afflictions."
"It's all right now," answered Giles. "We shall have the squire's character cleared, and your face, my dear, will be like itself again, and you shall be married from my house and I'll throw all the old shoes after you that I can find in the neighbourhood. Humph! What a happy day we're having. Nil desperandum, never despair. Hurrah!"
His wife, Jenny, entered at this moment and said:
"What a noise you are making, Giles."
"Enough to make me, my dear. I'm nearly crazy with joy. It's all coming right in the end. Master Frank's to be proved not guilty and Miss Agnes is to be white once more, and I say, Jenny dear, get out the gin, for we mean to have a glass all round."
While Giles was talking and drinking Agnes wrote a long letter to Frank, bidding him keep up his spirits and telling him how she had met Signor Conti, and what the Italian was going to do for them.
This letter the constable took back to the prison with him, relieving Frank Burgoyne of much of the despair which possessed him.
A happy evening ensued and Conti, who seemed thoroughly determined to undo all the evil he had wrought, began to compound his drugs, administering the first dose of the antidote to Agnes that very night.
In the morning he promised to go to the City, see the proprietor of the bank, expose Ralph Hardacre and clear the character of Frank.
Miss Venner's plans were not progressing so well as she expected, but she was in blissful ignorance of the fact as she sat by the side of Lord Sunderland and listened to his impassioned phrases.
It is the hour of her triumph.
Let her enjoy it while she may, for the day of reckoning is at hand.
(To be continued.)

QUEEN ISABELLA has been well pleased with her reception at Rome, and before taking leave of the Pope presented him with a magnificent cross set in diamonds; in addition to which the Queen and her daughter, the Duchess of Madrid, contributed 30,000*l.* Peter's Pence.
THE ALEXANDRA PARK FIRE.—A very fine collection of ceramics, belonging to Dr. Diamond, was totally destroyed by the fire at the Alexandra Park; it comprised about five hundred pieces. It is said that the managers of the establishment at Muswell Hill undertook to insure, against risks from fire, the collection generously lent by Dr. Diamond, but failed to carry out their engagement. The greatest loss to the public from this fire will be the refusal of many owners of works of art to contribute to "loan collections." Of course, not a few of these contributions have been made for commercial purposes, and the gratuitous exhibitions served as preliminaries to auctions; even these not wholly satisfactory arrangements will be entered into less seldom than before.
VERY TRUE.—It is not a subtle conceit, but is consistent with observed fact, that men who are prone to praise and commend others are mostly men of melancholy character. At any rate, they are men who take a very high view of the difficulties and

troubles of life. Hence they think much of small successes. Considering the faultiness of education, the strength of passion, the hardness of the world, the difficulty of making any impression upon, and the many embarrassments which beset a man's progress in life, persons of the character we have described are rather surprised at anybody's behaving well or doing anything rightly. That laudation which, when uttered by other men, is merely praise of an ordinary kind, is, when uttered by these men, a large appreciation of trials and difficulties overcome—perhaps an exaggerated appreciation, by reason of the excess in the sad and desponding view they take of human life. Following up somewhat of the same train of thought, we may observe that the censure which men pronounce upon the conduct of others is mostly a censure proceeding from lofty expectations. The young especially abound in censure of this kind. They blame severely, because they look forward so hopefully both for themselves and others, and have as yet so little apprehension of the trials, struggles and difficulties which are encountered in this confused and troubled world.

LITTLE SUNSHINE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FOR some time Lily and her friend continued to discuss the singular turn which events had taken, and then Jennie Brown was obliged to leave her friend and go to her daily toil.
Lily Davis sat reading a book after her friend's departure when suddenly she was startled by a knock at the door, upon opening which the "imp," the boy whom we have previously introduced in the counterfeiters' den, stood before her.
He was a strange-looking boy, and the most astute judge of character would have found it hard to make him out exactly.
He had a nerveless, frightened look—the look of an abject coward; but, after all, the predominant expression on his countenance was one of cunning.
Lily did not fancy the boy's look; but in one of her innocent and pure nature suspicion of others could hardly be said to have had an abiding place; so, smothering her dislike, she asked, kindly:
"Whom do you wish to see, little boy?"
"If you please, ma'am," replied the imp, in a whining tone, "can you tell me where Miss Lily Davis lives?"
"She lives here," replied Lily; "I am Lily Davis."
"Oh, ain't I glad!" exclaimed the boy, in a gratified tone. "I was so afraid of goin' into the gruff houses! I've got a letter for you, miss, and here it is."
And as he spoke he placed in Lily's hand the letter which Luke Davis had written.
Our heroine took the letter, and, recognizing her father's writing in the superscription, broke it open, not without a secret dread that it boded no good, and read as follows:
"MY DEAR DAUGHTER.—I am dying among strangers. Come to me. I have been a bad man, but I am repentant now, and anxious, so far as in me lies, to atone for all my past transgressions. I cannot die without seeing you, for I have certain revelations to make which are all important to you. Come at once. Do not waste a moment or you may be too late. The people with whom I am staying are good Christian people, and are very kind to me; but the confession which I have to make must be made to you alone. Come, therefore, and come quickly. Do not deny your dying father this last request. If you do you will regret it to the last moment of your life, for it is more on your account than on my own that I wish to see you. The bearer of this note will conduct you to me. You may trust him thoroughly, for, though somewhat simple, he is faithful. Once more I conjure you to come at once.—Your loving father, LUKA DAVIS."
Lily studied over this letter for some moments. She hardly knew how to act. She never doubted that the letter was genuine. She was too well acquainted with her father's chirography to doubt it.
But she thought of the desperate life which Luke Davis had led, and of the trouble and disgrace which he had brought upon her, and she could not help asking herself if he was acting honestly now.
After mature reflection, however, her unsuspecting nature would not allow her to believe that he could be so terrible a hypocrite as to write such a letter without a foundation for it.
"You know the writer of this letter, boy?" asked Lily.
"Yes'm; if you please, ma'am, it's Mr. Luke Davis, and he told me that he was your father, ma'am," replied the boy. "Oh, he wants to see you so bad, ma'am! Don't be, though! He's been a-prayin' all day and all night to see you, ma'am, and the good

people have been a-prayin' with him. It would make you cry to hear 'em, ma'am, and I can't help a-cryin' now when I think of it."

And the boy wept copiously.

"Then the people he is with are very pious people, are they?" asked Lily.

"Ain't they though?" replied the boy, in a sort of rapt ecstasy: "I never seed sich pious people as they are! And they're hard-workin' people too—they work more at night than they do in the day-time. They don't have no time for studyin' mischief—they don't."

"And what do they work at?" asked Lily.

"They makes pictures and things, and sells 'em at a big profit," replied the lad, readily. "Oh, they make a good deal of money, ma'am; but they're very poor, they are, cos they gives so much away in charity. Will you go, ma'am? Cos your poor, dyin' father said I was to fetch you as soon as possible. The doctor said he mightn't live two hours, ma'am, when I left."

"Then I must indeed make haste!" exclaimed Lily, whose sympathies were greatly aroused, "or the vital spark will have fled before I reach him, and that would be terrible."

Seating herself at the table, Lily wrote a few lines to her friend Jennie, merely stating that she had been unexpectedly called away, and would return in a few hours; and then, preceded by the boy, she went forth into the street—first, however, locking the door of the room and placing the key where she knew her fellow lodger would find it.

Lily Davis did not feel very comfortable as she walked by the side of her strange companion. She had no idea of treachery, for she knew the letter was from her father, and she could not believe him to be base enough to wish to injure her more than he had already done.

Still the errand upon which she was bent was a disagreeable one at the best, and sympathy from him whom she supposed was dying was mingled with a feeling of dread and shame at the idea of being known by strangers as the daughter of a man who had so black a record as the one who pleaded so pathetically for her presence at his bedside.

"How are we to get there?" said Lily, as they walked along. "Shall we have to walk?"

"Oh, bless you, no!" replied the boy. "Don't you know I told you there'd be a carriage there waitin' for us? You don't suppose Mr. Haines would allow sich a delicate, pooty little lady as you to walk all the way, do you?"

"True—true," replied Lily. "I forgot you said that there was to be a carriage. But who is Mr. Haines?"

"Oh, he's the gentleman that 'tends to matters at the institution, and keeps everything straight," replied the boy. "Oh, ain't he a clever man, and a good un too? He saved my life once."

"How was that?" asked Lily, with much interest.

"Well, you see, ma'am," replied the boy, "I never had no father nor mother as I know of. All I know about myself is that I used to live with an old woman, and one day she came behind me in the alley-way, and was goin' to knock my brains out with an axe, for Mr. Haines he had been on one of his missionary visits up the alley, and he come up just in time to catch the axe as it was a-comin' down on to me. Then he took me away from her and took me home with him, and put clothes on me and fed me, and said he'd attend to my education and take me inter business with him one o' these days."

The boy's story was true as far as it went, but had Lily known what sort of missionary labour Mr. Haines was pursuing at the time he fell in with the street Arab, or what kind of education he was now giving him, she would not have held him in such high esteem.

She did not know, however, and so she set Mr. Haines down in her own mind as one of the very best men that ever lived, and her eyes filled with tears of sympathy as she said:

"What a kind, good man Mr. Haines must be, and how you ought to love him."

"I do," replied the boy.

And again the lad spoke truthfully.

He was not without gratitude, and Haines was about the only person who had ever befriended him, and although he was harsh with him at times and kicked and knocked him about at pleasure, he bore it all with the patience and fidelity of a spaniel, and was always ready to kiss the hand that chastised him.

"I do love him," he continued, "and I believe I'd lose my life to save his. Oh, he's a good un, he is! You'd be astonished to see the way he makes money and scatters it about after he has made it!"

"He's a city missionary, I suppose," said Lily.

"Yes," replied the boy, "he's a missionary—any way he often leaves the house with his pockets full

of money, and goes about and gets rid of every penny of it before he comes back again."

"Those poor people must love him very much, too," Lily ventured to say.

"Not so much as they ought to," replied the boy. "He's been a father to them, and has been the means of sendin' a good many of 'em to a beautiful residence, and yet they ain't got a bit of gratitude. A good many of 'em would go back on to him if they dared, but they'd get their brains knocked out some fine night by some of the others wot he's helped, and so they have to take it out in growlin'."

"And who are the other members of the family in which you live?" asked Lily.

"Why, there's old Mother Clinker," replied the lad. "She takes care of the house and keeps things straight. Then there's five or six gentlemen and their sisters, and then there's Denny the Slogger—Handsone Denny we call him, for short—he's the man that has charge of the boat, and he'll row us over the river when we get there."

"Why, there's quite a large family!" said Lily, who was gratified to hear that there were a number of ladies in the house.

"Oh, yes," replied the boy; "it's a large family, and so quiet! You never saw sich a family! Why, there's no time hardly, miss, that you couldn't hear a pin drop around there. You see they don't want to disturb the neighbours nor attract the attention of parties sailing on the river. Oh, they does everything on the quiet. They are such nice folks! But here we are, ma'am. You needn't bother about the fare, ma'am. Mr. Haines gave me money to pay the fare. Come along, ma'am."

And as he spoke he paid the fare for both, and they passed through and took seats in the cabin of the boat.

"Thunder and fury!" suddenly exclaimed the boy, as he looked through the side-light out on to the pier, "if there ain't Hank the detective! Now I wonder what he's after!"

Lily looked at the boy, and was surprised to see that his face was pale and evinced every indication of great fear.

"What is the matter, my poor boy?" she asked, with much concern.

"Do you see that man a-standin' there, leanin' agin that rail?" asked the boy. "I mean that tall feller with a long gray beard, dressed like a countryman?"

Lily nodded her head affirmatively.

"Well," continued the boy, "he's one o' the worst fellers livin', he is! I'll tell you all about him when the boat goes off—that's if he don't come aboard. But if he does come aboard I must doggo him, for it won't do for him to see me, not now. Now, don't you speak to me, ma'am, not even one word—not till the boat goes off, for I'll have all I can do to watch him!" And the boy fastened his gaze upon the man as though life and death were in the scrutiny.

Lily also looked sharply at the man, but could see nothing in his appearance to excite such terror. He was a very plain-looking man, and, as the boy had remarked, was dressed like a countryman, but Lily could see nothing remarkable in his face, save that his eyes were very large and peculiarly keen, and that his countenance wore a look of great determination.

The boy never once removed his eyes from the stranger till the boat was off and had got some distance from the pier—then he heaved a deep sigh of relief, as though some great burden had been lifted from his mind, and exclaimed, more to himself than to Lily:

"Ain't I glad he didn't see me! He couldn't deceive me with his disguise! Not much! Now, I wonder what he's loadin' about there for! He's waitin' to meet somebody—that's what's the matter! I must tell the governor."

"Now perhaps you will tell me why the man frightened you so?" said Lily, as the boy seated himself at her side.

"Of course I will," was the reply. "As I told you before that man is one of the worst fellers livin', and if he had seed you and me together he'd a-follered us all the way home, and tried to lay some plot agin us. You wouldn't believe, now, that that ere feller would be mean enough and wicked enough to break up our happy home if he could, and bring misery, and trouble, and sorrow into it?"

"No, I should hardly think such depravity possible," replied Lily, with a look of horror.

"Jes so," answered the boy, significantly; "but he would though, quicker'n lightning! if he got the chance—that same feller is down on the missionaries heavy! Oh, ma'am, you don't know one half the wickedness of the world! That ere same feller has broke up at least a dozen sich families as ours and scattered 'em to the four winds of Heaven, and he's

layin' plans to hurt somebody this very minit. But he'll be clever if he gets a chance at us, for he don't know where we live and he can't find out."

Here the boat stopped, and hurrying Lily through the gate he took her to a carriage which stood in an out-of-the-way place, a short distance off, entered with her, and they were driven rapidly away.

A drive of some fifteen minutes took them still farther; then the driver halted and opened the carriage door.

A boat, with the oars in it, and a man standing beside it, was drawn up on the bank, and the boy offered his hand to assist Lily in. This having been accomplished, he exclaimed:

"Now, Denny, sharp's the word. Let's get home as quick as possible, or there'll be trouble."

"Ay, ay," replied Denny, sententially.

Lily looked at the man as he spoke, and was almost frightened at his hideousness. He was a bullet-headed, bull-necked, broad-shouldered fellow, with a flat nose, large mouth, great thick lips, and a face so seamed and scarred as to almost give him the appearance of a tattooed New Zealander.

The lad seemed to divine our heroine's thoughts, for he said, with a grin:

"We call him Handsome Denny, ma'am, and he is handsome in his way, but his beauty ain't nothin' to his workmanship. He is the best hand at the work he has to do you ever saw, ain't you, Denny?"

"Yes; and I'll give you a taste of my quality some day that you won't relish," growled the man, "if you don't keep a civil tongue in your head."

"Talk's cheap," retorted the lad, "you know well enough you wouldn't dare touch me, whatever I might say or do, for if you should the governor would discharge you on the spot, and you couldn't find such a man as him to work for every day. But don't let's get up any quarrel. The young lady mightn't like it. How is the poor sick man, Mr. Davis? Is he alive yet?"

"He was when I left the house," growled the man.

"Oh, dear, I hope I shall be in time!" ejaculated Lily; "my poor, unfortunate father! It would be dreadful for him to die without seeing me, when he so much desired it!" And the bright tears filled the girl's eyes as she spoke.

"Never fear, ma'am," said Handsome Denny, with an attempt to appear affable; "he's not dead yet, and maybe he won't die at all, for I heard the doctor say that if he lived an hour longer he'd be up and about again very shortly."

"Thank you, sir," replied Lily, with real gratitude. "I suppose the crisis of his disease has come."

"I think so," answered the man, with what Lily thought was a grim smile; "or, if it ain't come yet, the cry-sis will arrive shortly after you get there."

The boat struck the bank as the man spoke, and assisting Lily ashore the lad asked:

"Do you cross the river again to-night, Denny?"

"Not as I know of," replied the man, "my orders are to make the boat fast and then report to the governor. I believe he has work for me."

"I shouldn't wonder," he replied, significantly; and then he added, turning to Lily, "Now, miss, this way, if you please."

Again Lily felt a thrill of terror as she followed the boy. It seemed to her that there was something mysterious in the speed and conduct both of her guide and the repulsive-looking creature who had rowed them across the river. She had gone too far, now, however, to retreat, had she felt ever so great an inclination to do so, so she summoned all her courage and followed in silence.

The path brought them to a clearing, in the centre of which stood a somewhat dilapidated building, mounting the steps of which the boy was about to knock at the door, which, however, opened suddenly, and the figure of a sinister-looking woman, past middle age, stood before them.

"I was watching for you to save you the trouble of knocking," she said, looking first at the boy and then fixing her keen black eyes full upon the face of the girl, who shuddered in spite of herself as she met their gaze.

"Thank you, Mother Clinker, you always was thoughtful. How is the sick man?"

"He is about the same," answered the old woman; "and I suppose this young lady is the daughter he wanted so much to see."

"Jes so," was the sententious rejoinder.

"Come in, my little beauty," continued the woman, addressing Lily in a tone which was meant to be flattering and cordial, but which sounded to Lily like the croaking of a raven—"your papa will be very glad to see you, and so will the rest of us. We are all glad to see you."

"Please lead me to my father at once," replied Lily, in a tone almost of terror.

"Of course I will," rejoined Mother Clinker, with a hideous grin; "this way, my little darling! Oh, won't your papa be glad to see you! I shouldn't

wonder, now, if he should get better as soon as you are beside him. In fact I'm almost certain he will. Come along, darling! Come along, pet!"

And thus mumbling the old woman led the way up a flight of stairs and passed through the entry way to the front room. Here she knocked gently upon the door, calling out, in as soft a tone as she could assume:

"Can we come in, Mr. Davis? Your daughter is here!"

"Yes—come in!" was the reply, given in a tone of well-assumed weakness.

Accordingly the woman opened the door, saying as she did so:

"Go in, young lady. I will leave you alone with your father. The meeting will be an affecting one, I know, and I never could bear such sights, I am so tender-hearted."

Lily entered, closing the door after her, and advanced to her father's bedside.

His head was enveloped in a white napkin and the covering drawn closely up to his chin. It was impossible to get a full view of his face, but Lily could not help thinking, so far as she could see, that he did not seem wasted much, and she ventured to say so.

"No, my daughter," he answered, with the same assumption of weakness which had at first characterized his voice, "mine is not an illness that wastes the body much, it is more of a dropsical character. But I shall be better now that you have come. Indeed I feel better already."

"Oh, I am rejoiced to hear it!" exclaimed Lily, in a tone of gratification, "and I hope and believe that with my nursing you will be entirely restored to health, and if such should be the case you will promise me, father, will you not, to become a reformed man and lead a proper life in future? It is so dreadful to pursue the course you have been pursuing!—a course which, if persisted in, must inevitably lead to your utter destruction, both here and hereafter, and involve me, your only daughter, in your ruin. Promise me, father—oh, promise me that you will become a better man if Heaven should spare you!"

The girl's tones were earnestly pathetic, and as she ceased speaking she dropped on her knees at the villain's bedside and buried her face in her hands.

"I never was good at playing the hypocrite, especially when there was any snivelling or praying to be done," suddenly exclaimed Luke Davis, tearing the bandage from his head and jumping to the floor fully dressed; "I'm no more ill than you are, and as for repenting, and all that sort of folderel that persons and their dupes talk about, why I chalked out my path in life a good many years ago, and shall follow it till I'm called upon to pass in my checks. We've all got to go then. What comes after I neither know nor care anything about!"

For a moment Lily was absolutely paralyzed by terror. She saw in an instant how great was her danger, and for a time her limbs refused to support her, and her tongue lost its utterance. She knew it was necessary to act, however, and, gathering strength from sheer desperation, she jumped to her feet, and, fixing her clear blue eyes defiantly upon the villain before her, she asked, in a voice, terribly calm:

"May I ask, sir, what your object in inveigling me here could have been?"

"Of course you may," returned Davis, dropping his gaze to the floor, and writhing under the look of scorn and contempt with which the brave girl regarded him, "and I will tell you; it's only fair that I should do that. You see, the plan was not mine, and I would not have favoured it if I could have helped myself, but I'm only a subordinate here, and am forced to do the bidding of my superior. The fact is, the captain got an idea in his head that you might be induced to blab if left to the counsel of your friends, and so he insisted that this little ruse should be practised to make you safe!"

"I see," said Lily, with terrible calmness; "and now that you have got me here, what do you propose to do farther?"

"Well, our intention is to keep you a prisoner here till after the day set for your trial is past, and the meddling idiot who interfered in your behalf is obliged to pay your bail. Then, if we cannot induce you to remain with us, we purpose to let you go, if you solemnly swear never to betray us."

"If you cannot induce me to remain with you!" exclaimed Lily, with a sneer; "why, man, is your knowledge of me so limited that you think I could, under any possible circumstances, be induced to remain, voluntarily, among a band of thieves?—for such, of course, are the tenants of this house?"

"Now, little girl," said Luke Davis, with great coolness, "I don't wish to see you any worse off than you are at present, and if you wish to avoid farther trouble you will listen to reason. You are not in a den of thieves—you are merely the companion, for

a short time, of ladies and gentlemen who live a gay and festive life on the proceeds of hard labour of a light and genteel kind. If you are reasonable no harm will come to you. On the contrary, you may succeed in capturing the heart and hand of our captain—as fine a looking fellow, as ever the sun shone on—smart as a steel trap, and as rich as a Jew. But if you are inclined to be belligerent I won't be responsible for the consequences. You are surrounded by those who, although perfect ladies and gentlemen, are at the same time wonderfully determined, and somewhat unscrupulous when opposed. Every avenue to escape is cut off, every passage guarded, and so complete is our seclusion here that we might keep you a prisoner for years without the fact being known, for there is not a detective in the country who knows of our whereabouts. You will readily perceive, therefore, that your proper course is to accept the situation with as good a grace as possible, and not compel us to treat you inhospitably."

"And you profess to be my father!" exclaimed Lily, in a tone of ineffable scorn. "I'll not believe it! There is some jiggery about the matter. My mother would never have married such a villain!"

"Your mother died before you were three weeks old," replied Davis, quietly, "and I was a very different man at that time from what I am at present. Why, bless your dear soul, I was a member of a church then, and had a Bible-class in the Sunday school. To look at me now you would hardly believe that, would you?"

"If you are indeed my father may Heaven forgive you!" exclaimed Lily, in a tone of agony, "but you are in great error if you imagine for a moment that I will sit apinely down in this den, and allow things to take their course without making an effort to better myself."

"I will make one struggle for liberty, though I lose my life in the effort!"

And before Luke Davis could stop her she had dashed with the speed of lightning through the door and down the staircase, uttering a piercing scream at every step she took.

(To be continued.)

LADY CHETWYND'S SPECTRE.

CHAPTER LIII.

MR. BISSET, on opening Lady Chetwynd's coffin had expected to find it empty. He had looked for a triumphant vindication of his theories, but had experienced only an absolute defeat. He had arrayed himself in a secret conflict with Gilbert Monk, and Gilbert Monk had come off victor.

What was now to be done?

Mr. Bisset was too well convinced that he was right, too astute, too shrewd, too skilled in tracking out mysteries, to recede from the opinion he had already formed.

He was persuaded that the bones he had seen in the coffin were not the bones of young Lady Chetwynd, but that they had been recently placed there by Monk.

He was convinced that the silken robe he had seen in the coffin was not the robe that had been worn by the youthful marchioness, but one that Monk had caused to be made in imitation of it.

But how to prove this theory? How to unveil the truth? How to entrap to his own destruction a man whose cunning and sense of caution were something marvellous?

These questions occupied the mind of the detective officer throughout the few hours that intervened between the visit to the Chetwynd parish vault and daybreak.

He was up at daybreak, and soon after made his way out to the stable yard.

The stablemen were astir, and an air of bustle pervaded the place.

Bisset ordered his horse, mounted and rode away at a canter upon the road to Nunsgate.

"I'm only balked, not defeated," he thought, grimly. "There would be some credit in defeating that Monk. I saw the glimmer of a mocking smile on his lips as we separated this morning. He thinks he has come out ahead—but we're not through yet."

There was a threatening in the last words that showed that the mind of the detective was thoroughly aroused and in his present work. His professional reputation was at stake.

"There's more than one way through the woods," he said to himself. "My fox has doubled on me, but I am keen on his scent; I shall have him presently."

He was very thoughtful during the remainder of his ride to Nunsgate. Arrived at that station he found an early lounge to take charge of his horse, and sauntered into the telegraph office. The hour was now about seven; the operator was just entering

his office with a sleepy countenance. Bisset followed him, with his topknot, well air.

"I want to telegraph to London, Scotland and Newman, Chancery Lane," he said, languidly. "All ready? Send this message then: 'Did you telegraph to Monk yesterday?' That's all. Oh, add the address to which the answer is to be sent. 'Address Bisset, Chetwynd Park, Eastbourne, Sussex.' How much?"

He paid for the telegram and sauntered out again. He mounted his thoroughbred and rode swiftly back to the park, arriving in time to make his toilet for breakfast.

After breakfast Miss Monk retired to her boudoir and the contemplation of a parcel of samples and patterns which had arrived by post. The gentlemen repaired to the library.

Mr. Tempest looked over a collection of maps and charts upon the long library table, but in a manner that showed his mind was not upon them. Lord Chetwynd walked restlessly to and fro. Monk flung himself upon a Moorish couch, and said, coolly, with a dash of hidden insolence:

"Well, Mr. Bisset, what comes next in your programme? We have searched the house, have disturbed the sacred remains of the dead—what next? One would think that audacity could no farther go, but we are all just being surprised now. Shall you question the servants?"

"No; the servants, at least none of Lord Chetwynd's servants, know anything about the mysterious visitor, sir," said Bisset, calmly.

"And yet you have not questioned them? I suppose you know it by intuition. You detectives are shrewd fellows." By Jove, you know, if I were not the most frank and open-hearted fellow in the world I should be afraid of you, you know. I should indeed."

There was a vein of prickling sarcasm in this remark that might have stung the officer. Whether it did or not was not apparent.

"Mr. Bisset," said Lord Chetwynd, abruptly, "we have been upon the wrong track. How could you for one moment have doubted the fact of my wife's death? I fear you have dealt with great mysteries so much that you have magnified our small one. But your words, and that deed of last night, have stung me to a greater sense than ever of my awful desolation. I shall leave England again as soon—as soon—"

He stopped abruptly. He meant to say as soon as he was married to Miss Monk, but he could not utter the words. His whole soul revolted against this forthcoming marriage. Since the last night the whole course of his life seemed changed. His intended marriage seemed to him this morning a repulsive mockery. He could not even mention it in words.

"I do not wish to appear discourteous, Mr. Bisset," continued his lordship, in a tone of apology, speaking kindly and gently. "I fully appreciate your great professional qualities and your zeal in attempting to search out this mystery, but I could wish that last night's work were undone. My poor wife is dead. How could I for one moment have been tempted to doubt the fact?"

Mr. Bisset seemed in no wise disturbed even at Chetwynd's implied reproaches. He was content with himself and content to wait for his vindication.

"Pardon me, my lord," he said, quietly, "but you made a remark last night which I cannot quite understand. You said that the pattern of the lace on the robe we found in the coffin differed from the one on the dress you have upstairs; as indeed it does differ. Now which was Lady Chetwynd's burial robe?"

"The one in the coffin, of course, Mr. Bisset." "But your lordship has said that your lady had but one white silk dress made after that pattern," persisted the detective. "You completely identified the dress upstairs. That in the coffin seems a superfluous garment. How happens that?"

"I don't know. Miss Monk might explain the mystery, or Fidine, Lady Chetwynd's French maid, could explain it."

"I have spoken to Sylvia already on the subject," said Monk, promptly, speaking truth. "The same question had occurred to me as to Mr. Bisset. But Sylvia knew nothing about it. She only knows that Fidine brought the dress from her ladyship's wardrobe, and no one knows more than this."

"Fidine may be able to throw some light on the matter," declared the detective. "It might be well for me to see her. I'll think it over. I consider, however, the resemblance between the two robes a fact of the highest importance in this investigation. What else I think I may not mention at present. But I will clear up the whole mystery, my lord, to your satisfaction."

"All that requires clearing up is the mystery about this young girl who so closely resembles my lost

wife," said Chetwynd. "I want to know who she is, why she haunts me, why she dresses herself in a robe like my wife's burial robe; why she has spent weeks under my roof; in short, I want to know all about her."

"And you shall know, my lord," said Bisset, confidently. "Only trust me a little longer. But I fancy that the mysterious woman will not return at present, and it is not necessary that I should wait here until she appears. I shall go up to London to-day, and I beg you to telegraph me when she next shows herself. In the meantime we must wait patiently."

Monk looked furtively at the officer, who caught the glance and inwardly smiled.

Lord Chetwynd did not oppose his resolution, and the subject was dropped, it having become exquisitely painful to both Chetwynd and Tempest.

Monk went up to his sister's room. As soon as he had disappeared Mr. Bisset remarked:

"My lord, I have discovered more than you think, and I have good grounds for suspicions which I expect soon to verify. But I desire that even Mr. Monk should be made to think that I have retired from the investigation. I beg you to be patient still. I hope in good time to turn your mourning into joy."

With this communication he retired from the library and strolled about the grounds.

After an hour on the terrace he returned to the house by the garden entrance, and went to his room.

He did not emerge again until luncheon time, and then he went down to the breakfast-room as quiet and self-possessed as any guest of the house. One would not dream how hard he was at work at the great problem absorbing all his faculties.

At luncheon he was rather silent. Mr. Tempest exerted himself, however, to keep the ball of conversation rolling, and Chetwynd, in his habitual courtesy, set aside himself and his own griefs to entertain his guests.

Luncheon was nearly over when, as on the previous day, the butler entered with an envelope on a salver. Upon this occasion he passed Monk by, and approached the detective.

"A telegram for Mr. Bisset," explained the portly functionary. "The messenger is waiting."

Bisset took the message, tore it open, and read its contents. They were as follows:

"Did not send telegram to Monk yesterday, nor at any other time. SCOTCH & NEWMAN."

Bisset smiled tranquilly as he crumpled the paper in his hand and said:

"No answer. Here's a crown for the messenger, and something to pay for baiting his horse and himself at the Chetwynd inn."

He dropped a half-sovereign on a salver, and the butler withdrew. The incident struck Monk as a travesty upon the similar incident of the previous day. "Therefore he said, half-morningly, repeating, as well as he remembered it, the question which Bisset had put to him:

"Good news, Mr. Bisset?"

"Yes, sir, particularly good," said Mr. Bisset, pleasantly. "And yet my telegram is of no consequence—merely a business communication from Scotch and Newman."

Monk changed colour and glanced around him timidly.

Lord Chetwynd and Mr. Tempest were engaged in conversation.

Only Miss Monk heard Bisset's reply and comprehended its purport.

"Would you like to see my telegram, Mr. Monk?" said Bisset, in his good-humoured way. "You are welcome to do so."

He smoothed out the crumpled sheet of paper and passed it to Monk. The latter took it, read it, and passed it back with shaking hands and without a word. Bisset crushed the telegram in his pocket and coolly sipped his wine, watching the face of Monk with a coldly curious gaze.

Monk flashed at him a look of defiance and hatred, and Bisset only smiled exasperatingly.

After luncheon Bisset proclaimed his intention of proceeding to Eastbourne immediately on his return to London. He could not be persuaded to remain to dinner; and he begged the marquess to telegraph him if the spectre were again seen. He obtained Fife's address and stowed it carefully in his pocket-book, and soon after departed in good spirits on his return to town.

CHAPTER LIV.

Mr. Tempest remained at the Park some two or three days, and then went back to London with the secret of his relationship to Bernice untold.

Lord Chetwynd strove to interest himself again in his memorial school, but was restless, anxious and uneasy, and he found the task well-nigh impossible.

By day and by night Bisset's words haunted him. He tried to imagine how it would seem to find Bernice living, to have the light restored to his life, warmth to his soul, sunshine to his desolated home, but his stern reason would not allow him to indulge in what he deemed such vain dreams.

But his life was sadder than it had been, more drear and cheerless.

Some six days after Bisset's departure from Sussex Monk received a letter from Flack, informing him that "Miss Gwyn" was a close prisoner in Lisle Street, that she demanded her freedom, and she had become alarmed and distrustful of her jailers, and that she begged to see Mr. Monk immediately.

The time had come when Monk must go to her. He knew that Bisset had withdrawn himself from the park only to watch him. He was well assured that Bisset, in clever disguise, was watching the arrival of every train at London Bridge. Clearly his point then was not to go to London Bridge.

Convinced that his theory was right, he proceeded to act upon it. He left Eastbourne that evening for London, but alighted at Croydon, hired a private carriage and continued his journey in it.

He arrived in London at a late hour, and dismissing the vehicle, proceeded on foot to a small family hotel of which he knew, and at which he was not known.

He registered himself under an assumed name, and before he slept had shaved his face clean of beard, leaving only a heavy moustache.

The result of this last procedure was to disguise himself most effectually. The heavy beard that had covered the lower half of his face had concealed his mouth and chin and the contour of his face, as well as its expression. He scarcely knew himself when he had finished and contemplated his reflection in the mirror.

He was not nearly so well-looking as before.

The heavy beard had hidden a villainous mouth, a pair of massive jaws, and a long retreating chin.

His boyish aspect had vanished. He looked ten years older than before, and his cool, calculating nature, his low cunning, his ignoble soul, declared themselves in every line of his now uncovered visage.

He sighed, realising that he had ruthlessly parted with his greatest beauty, and one that had masked all his facial defects.

"I'll get a false beard to-morrow to wear until mine shall be grown," he thought, discontentedly. "By Jove, if it hadn't been absolutely necessary I could not have parted with that beard. But Bisset would never know me now, if we were to meet face to face. That thought is enough to console me for my temporary loss."

He went to bed and to sleep. In the morning he took his breakfast in his room, and about nine o'clock he took a Hansom cab and proceeded to Lisle Street.

He was admitted by a slovenly housemaid and directed to Mrs. Crowl's room.

He went upstairs and knocked at Mrs. Crowl's sitting-room door.

Flack gave him admittance.

Neither Flack nor Mrs. Crowl knew him. He came in jauntily, closing the door behind him. Bernice was not in the room, as he saw at the first glance.

His face, grown so suddenly old, and displaying the hidden indices of his true character, preserved little of his ancient similitude, and Mrs. Crowl and Flack continued to regard him without recognition.

Monk smiled, and his wide mouth looked strangely distorted.

"So you don't know me?" he exclaimed.

They knew his voice, and stared at him stupidly. Flack's astonishment was succeeded by alarm.

"What's up, governor?" he ejaculated. "Anything wrong?"

"No," replied Monk; "I have chosen to shave my beard, that's all. How's Miss Gwyn?"

"She is very indignant at being kept a prisoner, sir," said Mrs. Crowl. "She has called for help, but no one heard her. There's no lodgers in the house in the day-time, and nights I give her a sleeping position in her tea, and she's done the wiser for it. The landlady here is my friend, and my own cousin too, sir, and I've promised her a five-pound note when my employer—that's you, sir—comes for his refractory sister. My cousin thinks, sir, that Miss Gwyn is mad to run away from a good home and be an outcast, and my cousin thinks you quite right to keep the young lady shut up until you take her back home."

"How did you find Miss Gwyn, Flack?" inquired Monk, turning to his sinister-browed ally.

Flack replied by narrating the circumstances attending his recognition and recovery of Lady Chetwynd.

"Very well," said Monk, when his subordinate had concluded.

"Mrs. Crowl, you and Flack, with the young lady, must set out for Mawr Castle this evening. I cannot go with you, nor follow you at present. And during your stay there Miss Gwyn must be guarded as carefully as if she were the Man with the Iron Mask. You'd better give her a sleeping position before you leave this house, and let her pass on the journey as an invalid. Keep her closely veiled. It would be well to keep her under the influence of sleeping powders until you get back to the castle, and then you can lock her up. Here is money for the landlady, and money for travelling expenses."

He counted out a sum of money as he spoke, and gave it into the hands of Mrs. Crowl.

He sat down and discussed the situation of affairs with his allies for an hour or more, and then went away, promising to come to Mawr Castle as soon as he could—in the course of a few weeks—and having made arrangements to be kept informed of Bernice's state of mind and health.

About five o'clock Mrs. Crowl brought a supper to her prisoner, with a hot cup of tea, which was carefully drugged with a sleeping powder.

The woman went out, leaving Bernice alone. Bernice ate her supper, but avoided the tea.

She had drunk tea every night for the week of her captivity, and had slept stupidly after it. She was shrewd enough to put facts together in the relations of cause and effect, and on this night she poured the tea upon her carpet behind the chest of drawers, convinced that the beverage was drugged.

Then, having finished her supper, she lay on the bed and closed her eyes.

A few minutes later Mrs. Crowl entered.

She glanced at the recumbent figure on the bed and looked in the empty cup.

Then she opened the door leading from the bedroom into the passage without, and the landlady, who was standing outside, came in.

"You may as well take the tray out of this door," said Mrs. Crowl. "The girl's asleep, and will not waken till morning. I gave her a heavy dose, on account of the long journey that's before us. This door need not be locked again. Flack has gone for a cab and will be here directly, and will carry the girl down through this door, it being the shortest way. Here's your money, Nancy, and five pounds besides."

"I'll take it to the right and count it," said the landlady, going into the sitting-room. "See here," she added, a moment later. "The pay is ten shillings short. Meals for Miss Gwyn were extra, you know."

Mrs. Crowl came and bent over the bed.

Assured that Bernice slept, she went into the sitting-room to assist the landlady in recounting the money.

As quick as a flash Bernice leaped from the bed, caught up her effects, which were on a chair by the door, and fled out into the passage and down the stairs, putting on her hat as she ran.

The women heard her flight, and flew after her. Too late!

The house door was ajar, as Flack had left it on going out to signal a cab.

Bernice sped down the steps into the street. She was scarcely upon the pavement when a cab rolled up and Flack leaped out directly in her path!

(To be continued.)

VERDICT OF "NOT PROVEN."—Much misconception seems to prevail in the southern division of this kingdom in regard to this verdict, which is peculiar to the criminal law of Scotland. In a recent number of *Notes and Queries* the editor of that journal, in answer to a correspondent, states in substance that an alleged criminal in whose case a verdict of "not proven" has been returned, may again be sent to trial on the production of new evidence of guilt, than which nothing could possibly be more absurd. No individual charged with the commission of crime can be tried a second time for the same offence on any pretence whatever, not if afterwards could be adduced the most unequivocal proofs of guilt. In criminal causes the verdict of a jury is in every instance final as regards this specific charge. The difference between "not proven" and "not guilty" is simply moral in its character, and the verdict is returned only in such cases where there is insufficient evidence to convict the alleged criminal, while there yet remains such shades of suspicion as do not warrant his dismissal without some formal statement. Practically, "not proven" amounts to a verdict of acquittal; morally it does not. The verdict of "not guilty," as pronounced by a Scotch jury, denotes the jury's conviction of the alleged criminal's absolute innocence; "not proven," on the other hand, suspicions of guilt, only short of positive proof. The individual in respect of whom the latter deliverance is given goes without the penalty of the law, and that is all.



[AN ATTEMPTED ABDUCTION.]

ALICE ARMADON.

"Come, get up out of that, stop your whining and go to work. D'ye think because the old 'oman's dead you're going to be always snivelling? Get up, I tell you."

The coarse, harsh voice seemed to echo from every crack and crevice in the miserable room, and its owner, grasping a slender girl by the arm, pulled her rudely from the cot to the floor.

Overcome with grief and fear she sank sobbing at his feet.

"Now I've one thing to tell you," he growled, drawing down his shaggy brows. "If you don't get up and tend to your business I'll give you a trouncing, you lazy jade."

"Only a minute, I will in a minute," she said, in a broken voice, raising her tear-stained face pleadingly. "I ain't strong now, and I can't help thinking of poor Betty, 'cause she's dead now, and I miss her so—oh, dear!"

The words ended in a low, plaintive wail, but touched not the callous heart of old Bunker; his rough, brutish face grew blacker, and his dull, bleared eyes gleamed savagely.

"I'll Betty you, you idle whelp!"

And catching her by her left wrist he dragged her over the uneven floor, unheeding her cries of pain and sobs of anguish, dead to every human instinct. Reaching the kitchen, he cast her from him, and then, folding his brawny arms, gazed upon her with a malignant leer.

Aching in every joint, the poor child lay still for a moment, her face buried in her hands. At intervals her form shook, and hard, dry sobs broke from her lips, while agony mental and physical convulsed her form.

Fearing more abuse, she struggled to her feet, and, grasping a chair for support, turned her black eyes upon her tormentor with reproach and loathing.

"I'd rather die than live in this way," she mused,

pushing her long hair over her shoulders and almost weeping again as she saw the bruises on her arms.

"Light the fire, gal. I don't want no words. I've took care of you too many years to stand any of your impudence. Old Bet's gone, and you've got to take her place. Mind you keep a-goin' lively. I'll have order in my house, I swear I will."

The child went about her work with a humility touching in the extreme and wonderful in one of her years. But deep in her heart a resolve for liberty was forming, and occasionally it flashed in her eyes as she reflected upon her wrongs and her low surroundings.

In a short time dinner was ready—that is the potatoes were placed upon the table in a cracked dish, and the codfish in a tin plate.

When he had eaten every particle of fish and potato the man arose, stuck his soiled hat on his head, and, with a command to his slave to have supper ready at six, left the house.

Supper!

A scornful smile flitted across the girl's face as she removed the dishes from the table and thought of what would compose the next meal.

She pressed her hands to her brow, and exclaimed, as if just awaking from a dream:

"How have I lived here in all this dirt, with this old wicked man? It never seemed so awful lonesome as it does now, 'cause old Betty's dead, I suppose. He didn't beat me when she was alive, but he used to beat her, and that was just as bad, only it didn't hurt my flesh so much. I wonder why I ever was here at all? He ain't my father, no, no, I'm sure of that! Oh, dear, I wonder if I ever had any father, any mother, anybody that loved me."

Tears broke from her eyes, her slight form shook with grief.

"I never had," she went on, catching her breath, "for if I had they'd never let me stay here. I wish I knew more, then I could feel better. I ain't going to stay here a minute longer—I won't."

She started forward, her face bright with the thoughts that followed close upon her resolution. Beyond was the world, the great, active world, throbbing with life, glowing with beauty, the fairy-land of her ambition.

Surely there was room for her there, ignorant girl though she was.

But she would not always be ignorant, no, not when she could earn money and buy books. Her heart was pulsating now with the inspiration of fond hope, her mind revelling in the fancies it created.

But a knock at the door brought her back to her dismal surroundings.

She sighed as the vision faded away, and answered the summons.

A boy with a fair, intelligent face and large blue eyes stood on the threshold. His clothes were fine, and a watch-chain depended from his little vest.

The girl looked at him in mingled wonder and admiration.

What could he want here?

"You've made a mistake, hain't you?" she said, confusedly, for somehow those blue eyes seemed looking right into her heart.

"No, I think not," he answered, smiling. "You're the little girl who walked behind the hearse this morning, ain't you?"

"Yes," she said, choking down a sob.

"Well, father and I saw you," continued the boy, dropping his gaze and twirling his cuff button. "And we saw the man that walked with you too, and we thought you ought to have a new pair of shoes and a new hat, so father sent you some money."

He looked up now and held the money towards her. She bent forward in amazement, her great, black eyes dilated, her breath coming thick and fast.

"For—for me? Are you sure? I don't know what to make of it," she stammered. "It's—it's ten shillings, ain't it?"

She paused and gazed upon him tremulously.

"Yes," he nodded.

"And you nor your father don't know me, and only thought I was poor maybe. I thank—thank you, and I—I hope you'll know somehow how glad I am, 'cause I can't tell you now."

Then the tears burst forth, and she wept for joy, the first time in her life. The seeds of gratitude were planted in her breast, they would expand and blossom some time.

The boy gazed upon her sympathetically, but thought it strange that she should cry. He never cried when his father gave him money.

Presently she said:

"I want you to tell me something. Is it wicked for anybody to run away when anybody is sworn at and beaten?"

The youth reflected, his finger upon his lip.

"If anybody don't run into a worse place—no," he said, at length.

"There ain't any worse places than this," she thought, and then said: "I wish you'd tell me what your name is, I never see anybody like you before."

"My name is Lucien Ranney, I live in London. I'm here on a visit. My grandmother lives in High Street. What's your name?"

Her eyes drooped, a painful flush swept over her face.

"Me? I haven't any. I'm nobody. Betty used to call me Jin, but Mr. Bunker never calls me anything. I don't care though."

She didn't want to cry again before her visitor, so she flung her head on one side and tried to look careless.

He could not but notice her beautiful hair, as it swept over her shoulders in wild profusion, and he thought it very sad that she had not a name. But he had stayed too long already, and so with a smiling adieu he left her.

She watched him as he walked over the road, watched him with strange wistfulness until he disappeared from view, and then re-entering the shanty drew a long, long breath.

"I wonder if I'm awake," she mused, gazing at her suddenly acquired wealth. "I see it, and of course I am. I—I can ride on the railroad now, and, oh, won't I leave this place behind me! But if he should come, if he'd see this he'd steal it, and—I must hurry. I'm afraid he'll come before I can get away, and I should die if he did."

She glanced around apprehensively, and then running into the front room caught her hat and shawl from the bed.

The next moment she came out of the house, her face white with excitement, her eyes rolling restlessly.

But an instant she hesitated, and then, pulling her shawl around her, walked rapidly away.

Reaching the street corner, she broke into a run. On, on, as if chased by wolves, the child sped until she reached High Street, when, panting for breath, she caught at a tree to support herself.

Bunker would not be in that vicinity, and so she could rest a few moments and recover from her exhaustion.

But to her perturbed mind the minutes seemed very long.

She started on again, catching her breath at intervals.

Now she was within a few rods of the station, and she could hear an engine blowing off steam.

It was music to her, the sweetest music she had ever heard, and she redoubled her exertions to reach the station before the train should start.

She cared not whither it went, as long as it carried her away from the scene of her misery.

"How do you get into the carriages—what do you do, mister?"

She was standing now in the station beside a portly gentleman, and looking wistfully into his face.

He glanced at her scanty raiment, at her pale, careworn features, and then replied, slowly:

"Buy your ticket, child, and walk in as you see others do. But where do you want to go?"

"Somewhere where there's factories, please, sir," she answered, timidly.

"But there are workshops here, little girl; you needn't seek work elsewhere."

"I—I can't stay here. I—I don't want to," she replied, timidly. "Please do tell me some other place. Nobody cares for me here. Oh, sir, don't look cross at me, I can't help it."

"Macclesfield is a good place," said the old gentleman, contemptively.

He had caught a glimpse of the money in her hand and was half tempted to arrest her on suspicion, but his more charitable feelings prevailed, and he wisely concluded to mind his own business.

"Macclesfield," repeated the child, and, forgetting to thank her informant, she ran to the box and reaching up her money asked for a ticket. The clerk eyed her mistrustfully, but remembering that he was not hired to do detective service he gave her the ticket and the change.

With an exultant smile upon her features, and the magical piece of pasteboard that was to open the door of the great world to her clutched tightly in her hand, she entered a carriage and took a seat. Oh, if the train would but start, then she should feel perfectly free. And when at length it moved slowly out of the station the child clapped her hands softly and looked out of the window, as if expecting to see the face of nature change because of her joy. Alone, ignorant, friendless, she sought the glittering world, the deceitful world, in search of peace and plenty.

Messrs. Darrimer were seated at ease in their office conversing. The younger man was restless and excited; the subject under consideration annoyed and fretted him, but his father did not notice it.

"She's a beautiful girl—bright, quick, intelligent, and what's more she's a lady," continued the old gentleman, meditatively. "No mansion in the land is too good for her, her very motions are aristocratic. I wonder how in the world she came to work for her living."

"I don't know, and I'll be hanged if I care!" ejaculated young Darrimer, biting venomously at the end of a cigar.

"Hey-day! What's the matter with you, my son?" queried the old gentleman, looking up over his spectacles.

"Matter, father? Confound it, how provoking you are," exclaimed Francis, kicking a chair half way across the office. "But I'll tell you, and then if you don't get mad you have lost your spirit, that's all. I've not been blind to Alice Howland's beauties—who has? Every girl in the mill is envious, every man wild over her. Well, I asked her to be my wife, offered her the finest home in the town, and—what do you think?"

"She accepted, of course."

"No, she refused me point blank."

"She dared not do this after your condescension?"

"Dared, yes, and with scorn in her eyes and on her lips," replied the young man, smiting his fists together. "I asked her why, and with a smile that would have become a duchess she answered: 'Because I don't choose to accept your kind offer, Mr. Darrimer.' And she dependent upon our looms for her living!"

The old man grew very pale, his lips twitched nervelessly, but he said nothing. Turning around, he struck a bell, and in answer thereto the manager made his appearance.

"Send Alice Howland to me," said the mill-owner, in a voice tremulous with passion.

In a few moments Alice walked in with modest dignity, and bowing asked what was required of her.

The old man looked at her sweet, white face, her lustrous dark eyes, and her glossy black hair disposed so neatly about her finely shaped head, and remarked, abruptly:

"We shall need your services no longer, Miss Howland."

"May I ask why?" she said, concealing the surprise and pain she felt.

"Because we don't choose to accept them, that is all, Miss Howland," he sneered.

She turned, and for an instant her eyes rested upon young Darrimer with pitiful contempt, then, taking the money that the senior partner pushed towards her, she left the office.

Returning to the second floor, she put on her bonnet and shawl, and, bidding her nearest neighbours good-bye, once more passed downstairs and for the last time.

Well enough she knew why she had been discharged, but she would starve ere she would marry one she did not love, least of all such a dissipated fellow as everybody knew Francis Darrimer to be.

There were other mills to work in, she would not be discouraged; she had seen darker days than these—days when it seemed that life would depart for want of food, so she could afford to be cheerful now and think of the little money she had in the bank.

The next morning she visited other mills, but the proprietors looked askance at her and shook their heads.

This cut deep into her pure, sensitive nature.

Was it not enough for the Darrimers to drive her away from their mill without seeking to injure her character, her dearest possession? Truly they were noble men to make war upon an innocent, defenceless girl.

It was evident that she must leave Macclesfield, and the thought pained her, for she had come to regard the place as home.

Six years' residence there ought to give the people confidence in her; but, alas! when one foul breath assails a woman's name it is irrevocably gone.

Drawing her veil down over her face to conceal her tears, she hurried on to her lodgings.

As she entered she heard her name pronounced, and looking around she saw a stranger standing by the parlour door. He requested her presence, and she granted it; he then showed her several articles of baby apparel, remarking in answer to her look of astonishment that he had bought them of Mr. Bunker only a week before.

"Then he is alive yet," she said, meditatively.

"You know him, you ran away from him, did you not?" said the stranger, interestedly.

Alice looked at the man searchingly, but made no reply.

"Do not be afraid of me. I have it in my power to serve you. I have been on the watch for you more than a year. I assure you I am your friend. Will you answer me now?"

"Yes. I lived with Mr. Bunker until I was twelve years old, I think; then I ran away. I could not endure his abuse. There, I have told you the truth, and if you wish to use it against me the remorse will be yours, not mine."

"Don't judge me so harshly. I am a rough man, I know, but my business makes me so. I am a detective. I want you to get ready to take the six-o'clock train for London."

She glanced at him once as if she would read his inmost thoughts, and, apparently satisfied that he was honest, she went to her room to prepare for her journey.

Standing in a bay window that overlooked a beautiful garden were two persons, brother and sister, the latter yet in the early stage of mature beauty; but the former, prematurely old, with gray hair and wrinkled face, seemed but the shadow of a man.

Hatred of life, humiliation, both inspired by grief, were in his eyes, and scorn curled his lip.

"See there, brother, are they not lovely?" said the sister, pointing to two forms that moved among the flowers. "See his golden hair and her dark tresses side by side. Could a more splendid contrast be made? Now hear her laugh; what music! Surely that must touch your heart."

"Ay, it does; it cuts, tears, lacerates it!" he cried, clenching his fist, and hastily pacing the room. "It brings back the time when her mother, beautiful as she, won my heart, my hope, ay, my soul, only to mock and laugh at me—to desert me—to break her heaven-registered oath! Oh, Heaven! Annie, why will you arouse these memories that drive me mad—that make my misery doubly miserable? Have you no pity for me and my blackened life—blackened by her treachery?"

He covered his face with his hands and groaned aloud.

"My dear brother, my own Horace, who loves you more than I?" she said, with tender sympathy. "I

know your great sorrow. I know how it has eaten into your life, and I know, too, that you have forgiven her who was the author of it. Your noble nature, though writhing under a blow, cannot bear malice. And the child, the little darling, that alone was left to bear your name, cannot but inspire you with love. She is not to blame; she has done you no wrong; she has suffered as well as you; I could relate to you trials of hers that would melt you to tears. Brother, put away this phantom, take what happiness you may, and elasp your child to your heart."

"No more, Annie, no more—you will unman me. I will consider this in solitude, and try to forget the horror that lays heavy on my soul."

He walked unsteadily from the room, and his sister, sinking into a chair, prayed that peace might come to his heart.

Meantime the young people in the garden were conversing.

"Alice," said the young man, fixing his blue eyes upon her face, "do you know it seems to me, sometimes, that I have seen you before this—that we met years ago? I can't get it out of my mind, and yet it is absurd."

"Quite so, Lucien," she answered, laughing.

She dared not acknowledge the truth, lest his tender admiration should change to scorn, and it seemed that she could not bear that and live.

"But I saw somebody that had hair the colour of yours, but it was longer, and so beautiful. I shall never forget it," he continued, meditatively. "I was only a child, 'tis true, and yet, foolish as it may seem, I loved her or her hair." He laughed somewhat confusedly. "At all events, the picture is fresh in my mind to-day; the beauties of our own and foreign capitals have not served to efface it. Shall I tell you how this heroine of mine looked?"

"If it will please you, certainly," she rejoined, with cold indifference.

"Well, let us go into the park, and stroll by the river. We shall have a beautiful view then; it is my favourite resort when I am here."

She inclined her head in assent, and, leaving the garden, they walked through the park. At their right lay the river, shimmering in the sunlight like a polished mirror.

Presently he said, reflectively:

"Well, Alice, you shall hear of my heroine. She lived far away from here. Her home was barren, cheerless, devoid of the simplest comforts. But she, gentle, reverent, self-sacrificing, bore even abuse and maltreatment in silence and resignation."

He paused and gazed upon her intently for an instant.

She sighed, as if the narrative was very stupid, and, arching her eyebrows, said:

"Well, Lucien, what next?"

"The next is this. I am going to search for her. I love her, and I shall never be happy until she is my wife."

The girl's heart seemed to tremble within her.

Was he in earnest? Yes, his expression corroborated his statements.

What should she do? Her new pride counselled silence; her love urged her to confess, and yet it seemed unmaidenly.

"I'm going into the house for her picture. I painted it from memory," he said. "I'll be gone but a minute or two."

Meditating what she could do to retain his presence, which, like the bright sun, seemed necessary to her existence, she watched him until he disappeared from view.

At that instant she heard footsteps behind her, and, looking round in alarm, she beheld the evil face of Bunker glaring upon her.

The old horror seized upon her, and she strove to escape.

"So, gal, you're alive and decked out with fine feathers! Ain't you 'shamed to desert your old father in that way? You never had any feelings! Come, you belong to me. I want you."

"Oh, no, no, I am not yours! I'll die before I'll go!"

He had overtaken her, and was about seizing her by the shoulder, when at that moment Lucien came flying toward them.

One blow from his fist sent the villain backward to the ground, but he had hardly withdrawn his arm ere he was seized from behind and firmly held.

"You have got yourself into trouble, my young air. This girl's father comes for her, and you assault him; it may be that you have murdered him. He lies there writhing in agony; you are our prisoner. This girl goes with us too."

"Not till I'm dead!"

In a weird, hollow voice these words echoed over river and tree, and a pale, emaciated man came forth like a shadow.

Raising his stick, he struck to the earth the scoun-

drels who held Lucien, and then, glaring at the third he shrieked:

"You, you! I've seen those accursed features before! They were the cause of my misery—they were snakes in my path, and I could not kill them because 'twould have been murder! Who are you?"

"Francis Darringer!" interposed Alice, excitedly.

"Ay, he wears his father's craft on his brow—wears it as Cain wore his mask! Oh, that earth would swallow you up, you and all your race! You think to steal my child, mine—all I have left! No, no! she will soften my path to the grave, she will, my child, my beautiful one!"

Darringer and his confederates, thus defeated, made haste from the place, and picking up Bunker put him into the boat.

His excitement having passed, Horace Armadon soothed his child with tender words.

Lucien stood by his side, gazing devotedly into Alice's face, and, as he saw tears of joy well into her eyes, he said:

"Dear Alice, need I search for my love?"

"My heart triumphs. I have always loved you, Lucien. I am yours, if papa, dear papa, is willing."

"He is. Once more Horace Armadon is happy."

"Thank Heaven!" breathed the sweet voice of his sister as she drew near.

W. G.

LUCKY NUMBERS.

CURIOUS theories and superstitious prevail among devotees of the lottery and the gaming-table regarding "lucky numbers." There are traditionally fortunate and unfortunate combinations, and there are also newer favourites, based very often on figures connected with the chronology of famous men.

The career of Napoleon III. would seem to be considered by gamblers a specially successful one, for since his death they have been betting furiously on all numbers supposed to bear a relation to sundry pivotal events of his life. In Vienna, in Milan, in Rome, the newspapers notice this universal rage among regular patrons of the lottery for staking their fortunes on Napoleonic numbers; and, what is also curious, those numbers have in several instances turned out lucky. Thus in a late Vienna paper we read that "the death of the man of Sedan has brought good luck to the old women of this city, who give themselves up with unquenchable passion to the lottery." At the last drawing, as the paper goes on to say, the numbers most eagerly seized upon were 8, for Napoleon III.; 65, for his age; 20, for his birthday, it falling on the twentieth of the month; 90, as the highest number in the lottery, hence interpreted to signify "emperor"; and finally 52, the year of his accession to the throne. To the joy of all the old lottery gossips, the luck fell on those numbers, 3, 20, and 90. At Rome the death of Napoleon III. has furnished new combinations for the devotees of the lottery. At Milan the same infatuated class have "pointed a moral" of their own from the event—a moral quite different from the one extracted by sermonizers. They have been playing heavily on number 20 (a gold Napoleon being worth 20 francs), and on number 13, which latter, as the proverbially unlucky one, is interpreted to mean the ex-emperor's death. On the first drawing after his death these two numbers proved to be the lucky ones of the lottery, and it was then found that there had been a great number of winners.

Is this present year, 1873, to be, like some famous ones in history, specially fatal to crowned heads, and to heads that have once been crowned? During the whole twelve months of 1872 the only European sovereign who died was Charles XV. of Sweden, while none suffered irremediable misfortune; and in European royal families the only two losses by death were Archduke Albrecht and the Duke of Guise. But within the first six weeks of 1873 no less than three persons died who had at some time worn imperial crowns, and one monarch resigned his sceptre. First died Napoleon III., on the 9th of January. Then, on the 25th, at Lisbon, died the dowager-empress, Amelia, daughter of Prince Eugene, wife of Pedro I. of Brazil, and stepmother of the present Emperor, Pedro II. On February 8 the Empress Caroline Augusta, widow of Francis I. of Austria, and grandmother of the reigning Emperor, died at Vienna. In Spain the abdication of Amadeo is an incident to be mentioned in a year opening so ominously to crowned and dis-crowned heads.

The Duke of St. Albans has purchased the picture by Stoop which illustrates the entry of Charles II. into London at the Restoration, and which Mr. Graves bought at the sale of the Meyrick collection. The picture is to be sent down to Beestwood, the estate given to Nell Gwynne by the "Merry Monarch."

MEMORIAL WINDOW IN ST. PAUL'S.—A design for this window, commemorative of the public thanks-

giving in St. Paul's for the recovery of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has been prepared, which Her Majesty the Queen and the Prince of Wales have been graciously pleased to approve. The Council are in communication on the subject with the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's.

ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS.—Forty-one of the leading artificial flower makers of Paris have combined to send to the Vienna Exhibition a specimen of their united skill, which will prove indisputably that the capital of France still reigns supreme in the matter of artificial flower manufacture. This patriotic contribution consists of a complete greenhouse, filled with flowers of every description, perfectly imitated. In it are haycocks, the illusion of which is the fibres thrown out by the roots; bouquets, in which one sees the flower freshly blown, and that which has been in existence but two hours; wild flowers, the soft gray down of which seems ready to float away. The whole work is a marvel of artistic skill and unexampled patience.

DISMAL PEOPLE.

THERE are many people who take a strange delight in being dismal. Some of them are so selfish that nothing is ever right, because they imagine they ought to have something extraordinary in the way of luck. A few are ill-tempered, and adopt the dismal line on purpose to spite those who live with them, being well assured that this is the most effectual way of so doing. But the majority of the Dismals are good people (or, at least, people who want to be good), and they appear to be dismal strictly on conscientious grounds. If they put their feelings into words they would probably say something of this sort:

"This world is made up of sin, and sorrow, and suffering. It is a probation, and we need not look for anything pleasant until we pass into the next. We must not give way to happiness, or encourage joy. It is true that God gives the sunshine and the flowers, but He intends that while looking at them we shall constantly remind ourselves that the rain will come and that the flowers will die."

It seems impossible that such hearts can love, but perhaps they do so after their own dismal fashion. Everything is done for duty, and if by chance in performing this duty they stumble upon the doing of anything pleasant they are sure to spoil the taste of it. The question is, what pleasure do such people find in life? The best thing that mortals can do while passing through this thorny world is to pluck as many roses as possible.

A NOBLE WOMAN.—Her Serene Highness the Princess Felix Salm-Salm, of Prussia, recently paid a visit to the Deaconess Institution and Training Hospital, Tottenham. Her Serene Highness was conducted over the hospital by the members of the medical staff present (Dr. Busch, Dr. Lichtenberg, and Mr. Fletcher), and the lady superintendent; and after spending upwards of two hours in the inspection of the institution, and taking a walk in its grounds, the princess expressed herself highly gratified with its excellent arrangement. It will be in the recollection of many that when the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian went to Mexico the Prince and Princess Felix Salm-Salm formed part of his suite—the prince holding an important position in the council of the Emperor. In the war which followed, Prince Salm-Salm played a distinguished part, and when, after some hard fighting, the Emperor and his suite fell into the hands of Juarez, His Majesty and the prince were tried by court-martial and sentenced to be shot. On learning the dreadful sentence the princess, who had shared with her husband all the vicissitudes of the disastrous war, flew to the headquarters of the President, fell on her knees, and implored him to spare her husband's life. To the credit of Juarez be it said, he listened to the appeal with compassion, revoked the sentence of death and set her husband at liberty. The princess afterwards interceded for the unfortunate Emperor, but without effect. Soon after these events the prince and princess returned to Berlin, and after the lapse of a little time the prince re-entered the Prussian army. When the war broke out between France and Prussia Prince Salm-Salm's command was ordered to take the field, and his noble wife went to the military hospitals to nurse the wounded soldiers. At the battle of Gravelotte the prince was dangerously wounded; and no sooner was the news conveyed to the princess than she hurried to his side and nursed him with all the devotion of a loving wife. But all her efforts were fruitless, and, after enduring much suffering, the prince expired from the effects of his wounds. Thus left a young widow, Her Serene Highness returned to the military hospitals and resumed her care of the sick and wounded soldiers. Not only did she nurse

the disabled herself, and dress their wounds with her own hands, but also in helping the surgeons to perform many difficult operations the princess deservedly obtained great praise for her skill and nerve. Being a member of the Royal Family of Prussia and possessing remarkable energy of character, she made frequent requisitions for all kinds of comforts for the wounded, and insisted upon her orders being obeyed in a way that the red-tapists of the commissariat department dared not refuse. By this means many a wounded soldier had reason to thank her for luxuries which he would never otherwise have obtained. We understand that Her Serene Highness speaks with deep gratitude of the articles sent by England to the sick and wounded during the Franco-German war. Much of the hospital material supplied from other sources was of indifferent quality; but that which came from England, whether it consisted of clothing, food, or medicines, was invariably excellent.

VULGARITY.

WE commend the following extract to the thoughtful study of the young. Nothing is so disgusting and repugnant to the feelings of the good and thoughtful as to hear the young, driven the old, use profane, vulgar, or vulgar language. The young of the towns are particularly guilty of profanity. In our days it seems the "boy" does not feel himself a "man" unless he can excel in this great vice:

"We would guard the young against the use of every word that is not strictly proper. (These profane expressions—) would do no sentence that will not bluish the most sensitive. You know not the tendency of habitually using indecent or profane language. It may never be obliterated from your heart. When you grow up you may find at your tongue's end some expression which you would not use for any money. It was used when quite young. By using such you will save yourself a great deal of mortification and sorrow. Good men have been taken ill and become delirious. In these moments they use the most vile and indecent language imaginable. When informed of it after their restoration to health they had no idea of the pain they had caused; they had learned and repeated the expressions in childhood, and though years had passed since they had been indelibly stamped upon the heart. Think of this, you who are tempted to use improper language, and never disgrace yourself or your friends."

THE Very Rev. Dean Stanley recently read an interesting paper at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, "On the Tomb of Richard II.," recently opened in Westminster Abbey. The skeleton of the king and queen were discovered in it, and objects of later date, the tomb having been opened at an earlier period, an inscription being placed within recording the circumstances.

BAGSHOT PARK.—Prince Arthur will shortly be having a ménage of his own. Bagshot Park is one of the Royal residences, and during the life of Sir James Clarke the Queen gave it up to her old physician. For some time the park has been closed against the public, and it is now intended to erect a new residence there on a better site than that occupied by the present building. When the new house is complete Prince Arthur will reside there.

THE LOST CASE.—The trial of improved street cars in the western annex of the Exhibition took place a few days since. The judges, including the Duke of Beaufort and his brother, had the odd-looking vehicles trotted about for the delectation of those who were present, though they had themselves seen them in action. One day soon we are to have a procession of the competitors from Brompton to the City, which will be one of the most unique progresses imaginable.

LOWESTOFT IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND.—On the 12th of May, at Lowestoft, Lady Smith, aged 100 years, gave a dinner to 107 old people, whose united ages amounted to 8,228 years, or about an average 77 to each. The deaths of 11 people are also recorded, who all died within a week:—Mary Gull, of South Orough Lane, Lynn, 101 years; Miss Elizabeth Cato, of Great Easton, Essex, 95; Sarah Jackson, of Stowmarket, 81; Anne Ardie Taylor, of Earl's Colne, Essex, 80; the Rev. Richard Rowland Faulkner, of Harving, 82; Mrs. Elizabeth Oxer, of Shelling, 85; Mrs. Collyer, of Ingrave, 87; Mrs. Aldridge, of Ipswich, 83; Mrs. Unwin, of Barmes Street, Ipswich, 81; Mrs. Smith, of Broomfield, Essex, 86; and Mr. Orisp, of Harleston, 81.

SALE OF VALUABLE PAINTINGS.—At a recent sale of choice paintings and water-colour drawings, at the rooms of Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson, and Hodge, Rembrandt's portrait of the "Bargmaster's Daughter," purchased at the sale of Count Portalis for 210*l.*, was on this occasion bought for 1,627*l.* 10*s.* (Agnew); Holman Hunt's well-known picture of the "Strayed Sheep," having been exhibited at Manches-

ter in 1837, and at the Paris Exhibition in 1867, sold for 1,050*l.* (Nosed), a painting by W. Müller, of a "Mountain Torrent," was knocked down for 30*l.* 10*s.* (Cox); and several water-colour drawings by the same artist, considered as one of our best sketchers, sold for 12*l.* each. A series of ten small drawings, in water-colours, by D. Roberts, of the Alhambra and Granada, were purchased for 21*l.* 11*s.* The entire sale, sixty-two lots, produced 4,495*l.* 2*s.*

FACTIE.

A CONFUSION OF IDEAS.

Mamma: "I am always amused at that 'Marvel of Peruvian Art' advertisement!"
Daughter: "Oh, I know what perique means, ma! It means a whig party!"—*Fun.*

FROM THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

Said Robinson to Jones, at a recent exhibition, "Our friend Brown's sketches, I see, are most of them in sepia." "Why, yes, of course," said Jones, "it is the fittest medium for inelegant attempts."—*Punch.*

SUBLIME SIMPLICITY.—We have often looked for a sentence that would clearly explain it. A western paper kindly supplies the want in this beautiful simile:—"You might as well try to shampoo an elephant with a thimbleful of soapuds as to attempt to do business and ignore advertising."

AN IDEA OF PERSPECTIVE.

Countryman: "Nice work, isn't it, sur? I beg ye pardon, sur, you couldn't put me in the picture, may be?"

Artist: "Well, I haven't room."
Countryman: "Oh, I don't mind, sur"—(pointing to the sky)—"I'll go up here!"—*Fun.*

AN EXQUISITE.

Forward and Loquacious Youth: "By Jove, you know, upon my word, now—if I were to see a ghost, you know, I should be a chattering idiot for the rest of my life!"

Ingenious Maiden (dreamily): "Have you seen a ghost?"—*Punch.*

TAKING MATTERS COOLLY.—A rural youth lately went to claim his bride and conduct her to the altar, only to find that she had eloped and married another fellow the previous day. He didn't tear his hair, but just remarked: "By Jove, I'm glad she was married yesterday instead of to-day, if she is of that disposition."

AGGRAVATING FLIPPANCY.

Flippant Lady: "You seem depressed, Mr. Beauclerc! No bad news, I hope?"

Romantic Gentleman: "Ah! if one could only forget!"

Flippant Lady: "Dear me! Hadn't you better tell me all about it? and I'll forget it for you!"—*Punch.*

OBVIOUS INITIATIVE.

(A lively native of the deep sea seizes hold of a shepherd's dog by the tail, who makes off as fast as he can.)

Fishmonger (in a rage): "Whistle on yer dog, mun!"

Highlander (coolly): "Whistle on m' dog? Na, us, friend! Whistle you on your parlan!"—*Punch.*

REFLECTION AT LORD'S.

The Duke of Wellington did or did not say that the Battle of Waterloo had been won in the Eton cricket-field. That was in the old time; but if the cricket of those days was a pastime equivalent to military training in skill, courage, coolness, and endurance, how much more so is it now in this improved age of swift and over-hand bowling, which really amounts to a cannonade?

[Our correspondent says he was proceeding into some further improving meditations when a ball flew at him viciously and laid him on the turf.]—*Punch.*

"FOUR INDEED!"

A little while ago the Marquis of Lorne was going to head a lay movement for getting money for the struggling church. Look here, now!

The total average yearly receipts of the Church of England are £10,154,152; and the expenditure reaches within £224,000 of that amount.

A man, or an institution whose income is ten millions, and who can lay by three hundred thousand is not in such absolute want that we all need to send in our cheques at once. Meantime, as there seems some little confusion about the matter, if the Church likes, we will take that three hundred thousand odd, and so balance the affair.—*Fun.*

LEGAL AMENITIES.—During the pause in the examination of a witness who had been testifying about some bank notes hid in a bible the judge was mechanically thumbing the leaves of the official copy of the scriptures just used for swearing the witness, when the counsel for defence jealously asked, "Are you looking for money too?" "Looking for money?"

promptly answered the judge: "I should not expect to find any after the book had passed through the lawyer's hands."

An Art Reasoner.—A distinguished gentleman, whose nose and chin were both very long, and who had lost his teeth, whereby the nose and chin were brought near together, was told, "I am afraid your nose and chin will fight before long, they approach each other very menacingly." "I am afraid of it myself," replied the gentleman; "for a great many words have passed between them already."

ACADEMY FENCIBLES.

Affable Stranger: "There, sir, my work 'ung on the line again! Sir Francis can appreciate a good thing, sir!"

Astonished Stranger: "Eh? What? I thought Milais painted this—"

Affable Stranger (contemptuously): "Fool! I may have painted it, but I made the frame!"—*Punch.*

"It is the Cause."—There was no highest the other day on a man who died from the sting of a gnat. Acute inflammation set in after the bite, and he died within four days. "Of course he was a hard drinker, and in a bad state of body," say you! Not a bit of it! He was "thoroughly healthy in every particular," says the report. But—was he a teetotaler. It appears gratis prefer teetotalers to people who use alcohol and tobacco. We don't—but that only proves we are not a gnat.—*Fun.*

BEST.

If Fame is a bubble,
And pleasure a toy—
If Love's name is Trouble,
And gold hath alloy—
Ah! what then is left us,
Of worst or of best?
When time hath berft us
Of all—is there rest?

From toiling on ocean,
From sorrow on shore—
From dust and commotion,
From wave and the oar—
From hard hands that hold us,
From false lips that we've prest—
When life's sun is told us
At last—is there rest?

On height and in hollow,
Through fire and through foam,
The phantoms we follow,
Unceasingly roam;
We follow, unheeding
The thorns we have prest,
With feet that are bleeding
We seek for our rest.

Thus wearily roaming,
What reach we at last?
What lies in the glowing
With still-face aspect?
These cold fingers gleaming
On passionless breast—
This sleep without dreaming—
Ah! this must be rest.

C. H.

GEMS.

The bold defiance of a woman is the certain sign of her shame—when she has once consented to blush it is because she has too much to blush for.

True modesty blushes for everything that is criminal. False modesty is ashamed of everything unfashionable.

A weak mind sinks under prosperity, as well as under adversity. A strong and deep one has two highest tides, when the moon is at the full, and when there is no moon.

When the blossoms and leaves of a woman's beauty fall we discover her defects, as we behold ravens' nests in the trees in winter.

THE SHAH.—The Shah reserved himself till the last, and then he let the people understand what he really was. They had known him hitherto only in the disguise of diamonds and Oriental reserve, until of a sudden he appeared at the Crystal Palace as a mortal man—as one of them, indeed—dangling off all disguise, going a-marketing for photos and sugar-plums, and letting the crowd in upon himself, laughing heartily only when they jostled him in their eagerness to touch him and see how real he was. The same was his behaviour at the International. It might have been suspected that there must be good and real stuff in a man who could break through the strong Oriental bondage that holds rulers fast indeed in Persia; but still we did not get at the fact very quickly. The great and graceful homage that the Shah paid to our Queen when Her Majesty gave him her portrait, and the generous vivacity and warmth

with which he exhibited that gift to the people, and kissed it before them, will long be remembered and cherished among us; and it will assuredly cement the two countries by, if an ideal sentiment, nevertheless a very powerful one.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

VARNISH FOR IRONWORK.—Dissolve asphaltum by boiling in asphalt of cod-liver, and when cold thin down with paraffine or turpentine. Apply in several coats, drying each time in a hot oven.

PRESERVING FRUIT.—The fruit is preserved whole, and more care is necessary in the operation than is requisite for the making of jams and jellies. The first thing to be done is to prepare the syrup. To every pint of water add 2 lb. of loaf sugar, and the white of an egg well beaten; put them into a preserving-pan, but let it stand till all the sugar is dissolved before it is set on the fire. When it boils up throw in a teaspoonful of cold water, and do not stir the sugar again. Let it come to a boil a second time, then stand it near the fire to settle, and afterwards skim carefully and set aside for use.

STATISTICS.

MEDICAL SOCIETIES IN SWITZERLAND.—There are forty medical societies in Switzerland, including practitioners in all the cantons except Tessin and Valais. The largest is the cantonal society of Zurich, with 149 members. One—the Oberaargau Medical Society—is more than a hundred years old; and five others have existed more than fifty years. About half of them hold twelve or more meetings in the year; the remainder meet less frequently—from one to seven times in the year. The cantonal society of Berne possessed a fund of 9,500 francs at the end of 1871; the subscriptions to the others vary from one to five francs yearly.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The increase of the Russian field artillery by 240 guns is officially announced.

QUEEN ISABELLA of Spain, before her recent departure from Rome, presented the Pope with a cross set in diamonds, and subscribed 800*l.* to the Peter's Pence Fund. Her daughter subscribed 400*l.*

It is coming to a pretty pass in the army when we hear upon authority that in many regiments men are refusing promotion on the ground that the extra pay does not compensate them for the additional duties and responsibilities incumbent upon sergeants and colour-sergeants, in consequence of the reduced number of company officers.

THE PRINCE IMPERIAL, who is now with the Empress in Switzerland, will return for the 15th of August to Chislehurst, in order to receive, on the occasion of the anniversary of the national fête, the good wishes of the numerous and faithful followers who last year paid their homage to Napoleon III. The Prince will do the honours of Camden House, as Her Majesty will be absent in Scotland during a few days at that time.

A DOUBLE LIFE.—The Bishop of Bordeaux describes a singular case of somnambulism in a young priest, who was in the habit of writing sermons when asleep, and although a card was placed between his eyes and the note-book he continued to write vigorously. After he had written a page requiring correction a piece of blank paper of the exact size was substituted for his own manuscript, and on that he made the corrections in the precise situation which they should have occupied on the manuscript.

FOOD PRESERVATION.—The Geelong Meat-Preserving Company are now preserving something over 20,000 tons a week of beef and mutton. What promises to be a very important trade has been opened up with India. Some time ago the company sent a small consignment there of preserved meats and soups; these were so highly approved of that by the last mail the company has received an order for between fourteen and fifteen hundred dozen of tins.

THE SHAH AND THE PREACHER.—Of course Dr. Cumming has "improved" the visit of the Shah. In a recent sermon, he observed that ten of the tribes of Israel were once located in Persia, and that it was not at all improbable they would yet reappear from it, after having been two thousand years hidden from the gaze of nations, and join themselves to the other two tribes. "If such proved to be the case," Dr. Cumming would consider that the "fulness of the time" might be expected. Dr. Cumming recognises in the visits of the Sultan, the Khadive, and the Shah to England the fulfilment of the prophecy that three kings would come forth from the East. But it will be awkward for this idea if, as is probable enough, a fourth, fifth, or sixth Eastern monarch should take a European tour.

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BOOKS RECEIVED.

EVE, and other verses. By CHARLES GARVICK. Simpkin and Marshall.—This small volume, beyond its poem of Eve, consists for the most part of short songs and ballads. Many of these were written, as the author informs us, in order to "provide some composer with pegs whereon to hang his music." Such titles as *His Queen, A Month Ago, Will you Forget? The Song of the Waters, The Countess Maid*, fully suggest the subjects of the verse. If not powerfully original, the poems are usually pleasant, are always of respectable composition, and are occasionally very melodious in execution. Here and there we detect an offence against good taste, as in the reference to the rector and the dog, or as in the poem on the lovely countess. But the little book is well worth reading, and we are glad to give it our general commendation.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS

FLORENCE—Thanks for your communication.
EMILY S.—Not till she has fully attained her majority.

J. L. A.—There is a publication with that title. Address to the office, Fleet Street, E. C.

POPLEY—Yes, such a person would be allowed to give evidence; but his evidence would be little worth. We may add that public morality is far too pliant on so enormous a subject.

R. S. T.—We could not honestly encourage you to emigrate to India; least of all in search of employment. People usually go out after having formed some engagement first in England, and anything else would be blind folly. The climate is the reverse of healthy, and living for Europeans is expensive. It is therefore one of the last places to go to, unless you have secured a good situation, and unless you possess robust health.

ABRAHAM NEIL—The poem beginning "Ah, County Guy, the hour is nigh, The sun has left the sea,"

is correctly ascribed to Sir Walter Scott. It occurs in one of the earlier chapters of his novel, "Quentin Durward." By gross mismanagement most of the songs from the novels are omitted in the so-called popular editions of his poems. Yet they are as truly poems as any poem he ever wrote; as much so as "Marmion," or the "Lord of the Isles."

R. S. P.—A method of treating animal hair for the uses of the hatter, which has been kept secret for a long time, is now known to consist in the application of a solution of the nitrate of mercury, for the purpose of preventing the putrefaction of the fibre. This substance, however, is known to be very deleterious, both to the health of the workmen and to the implements of the trade; and, quite recently, carbolic acid or creosote has been used to great advantage as a substitute. This has the property, not only of preserving the animal matter, but of causing the hairs to contract, thus rendering them more apt to felt. The subsequent treatment of the fibre is according to the usual process, and the carbolic acid (or the carbonates, if preferred) may be added to the oleaginous or astrigent elements used by hatters.

LEONORA—We have received the verses, the one about the Hawthorn and the other a song designed for Hay-makers. The subjects are good in themselves, but the sentiment is feeble and commonplace; the words are often ill-selected, and the flow of the verse is seriously wrong. As a minor matter, also, it is a mistake in taste to talk affectually about Sol's sheen. Why not say the sun's at once? Hybrid English, mixed whether with French or Latin, is execrable. Beffect calmly on the first three lines alone:

"Toss up, toss round, and fling about,
The fresh-mown hay, the sweet new hay;
Boys and maidens, toss and shout!" etc.
Here to toss round is, if it means anything, the same as to fling about—an indurpiousness, the same thing said twice over. If hay is fresh it follows that it would be new—another inane repetition.

CLAIMANT—**L. MR. HAWKINS, Q.C.**, so conspicuous in the Tichborne trial, was called to the Bar in 1843. He was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1858, and is a member of the Home Circuit, and a bencher of the Middle Temple. He has an extensive practice as a barrister, and of late years has been employed in many important cases in the Superior Courts of Law. He contested unsuccessfully the borough of Barnstaple at the general election of 1863. 2. Sergeant Ballantine was born about 1814. He was called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1834, and goes the Home Circuit. He was created a Sergeant-at-law in 1856, and received a patent of precedence in 1863. He has several times sought election to Parliament in the Liberal interest, but without success. From his wonderful

skill in sustained discussion and his pointed, genial rhetoric, which for a lawyer is singularly the reverse of dry, we should imagine he would be a great accession of strength to any political section in the House of Commons.

ALICE—The following formula for a plain omelet is by Soyer:—Break four eggs into a basin, add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful of salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto of pepper, and beat them up with a fork; put into the frying-pan 1 lb. of butter, lard or oil, place it on the fire, and when hot pour in the eggs and keep on mixing them quickly with a spoon until they are delicately set, then let them slip to the edge of the pan, lay hold by the handle and raising it slantways, which will give an elongated form to the omelet; turn in the edges, let it rest a moment to set, turn it over on to a dish, and serve. It ought to be of a rich, yellow colour, done to a nicety, and as light and delicate as possible. Two table spoonfuls of milk and 1 oz. of the crumb of bread, cut into thin slices, might be added. Omelets may contain bacon, ham, herbs, shellfish, or anything else at the pleasure of the cook. The ingredients are simply to be dropped into the above mixture. Hurl omelets are excellent. Anchovy and shrimp omelets are generally prepared by placing a few spoonfuls of the respective sauces in the centre of the omelet when nearly dressed.

SARTOR—The toga (togo, to cover, lat.) was the principal outer garment of the Romans, and originally perhaps the only one. Subsequently an under garment, the tunic, was added. It was probably of Etruscan origin, and yet it came to be considered the distinctive badge of the Roman citizen, whence the Roman people are called togati, or gens togata; and consequently when the Cisalpine Gauls received the rights of citizenship their country was spoken of as Gallia togata. In opposition to Transalpine Gaul or Gallia braccata (bracched, as with the Highland Kilt for example). At first it was semicircular in shape, but afterwards when it came to be an elaborate and complicated dress it must have been a smaller segment than a semicircle. It required considerable art to make its folds fall gracefully. The toga was made of woollen cloth, and, except in the case of mourners, was of a white colour. Accused persons sought to excite sympathy by going about in a soiled and unsightly toga; while those who were seeking office were accustomed to dress themselves in garments which had been rendered artificially bright by the help of chalk; hence they were called candidati, or "shining ones." Under the emperors the toga, as an article of common wear, fell into disuse, the Greek pallium and other garments being worn instead. It was retained, however, for official occasions by the public functionaries.

LITTLE PEOPLE.

Full of frolic, full of fun,
Little people, how they run;
Through each lane and through each street.

Trace their busy, happy feet;
Over meadows sweet and fair,
Little people everywhere.

In the palace by the sea,
In the house of high degree;
In the gardens of the great,
In the towns of ancient date,
Children ramble free from care,
Little people everywhere.

In the hovels made of clay,
Full of gladness, merry play;
In the wigwags, in the cots,
Indian babes and Hottentots
Frolic with their dark limbs bare,
Little people everywhere.

On the mountains, in the vales,
'Mong the woods and flowery dales,
Chasing butterfly and bee,
Airy, graceful, bright and free,
Children ramble, sweet and fair,
Little people everywhere.

M. A. K.

FRED P., eighteen, 5ft. 5in., and fair complexion. Respondent must be pretty, loving, and domesticated.

LYDIA, twenty-two, tall, dark, good looking, and affectionate, would like to correspond with a sergeant in the 16th Lancers about thirty-three.

LILY, twenty-two, medium height, dark curly hair, affectionate, and domesticated, would like to correspond with a sergeant in the 3rd Dragoons, about forty.

JULIA S., twenty-two, tall, dark-brown hair, and blue eyes. Respondent must be tall, dark, fond of home and children; a mechanic preferred.

OLIVER C., twenty-three, tall, dark complexion, and affectionate, desires to become acquainted with a fair, amiable young lady about twenty.

EMMUEL, twenty-two, considered handsome, tall, fair, having good prospects. Respondent must be pretty, of a loving disposition, domesticated, and a Good Templar.

MADAME S., twenty-three, tall, dark, loving, and fond of music, desires to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman, possessing a good income.

ETHEL M., dark hair, blue eyes, and fond of music and singing. Respondent must be tall, dark, and fond of home.

MAUD, nineteen, dark-brown hair and eyes, 5ft. 2in., desires to correspond with a young gentleman handsome and affectionate.

ISABELLA, seventeen, dark, good looking, affectionate, and fond of music. Respondent must be fair, tall, and good tempered.

ETHEL, twenty, tall, dark complexion, and affectionate, desires to become acquainted with a fair, amiable young man about her own age.

WINIFRED, twenty, 5ft. 5in., fair complexion, blue eyes, very affectionate, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-three, loving, and fond of home.

HAROLD, twenty-five, dark, medium height, and with good prospects, would like to correspond with a well-educated young lady about twenty, loving, and fond of music.

MINNIE, twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, considered rather good looking, is loving, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark,

good looking, loving, and fond of home; an engineer preferred.

J. J. H. C., twenty-one, 5ft. 10in., fair complexion, light-brown hair, blue eyes, loving, and fond of home, and a mechanic. Respondent must be nineteen, tall, and affectionate.

G. R. C., twenty-four, 5ft. 9in., fair complexion, dark-brown hair, grey eyes, of a loving disposition, and a mechanic. Respondent must be tall, about twenty-two, loving, and domesticated.

DELOATE MILLIE, twenty-two, fair, rather tall, domesticated, pretty, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be about twenty-five, tall, steady, and affectionate.

FRANCES R., twenty, medium height, pretty, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be good looking, dark, loving, and fond of home; a mechanic preferred.

ANT, twenty-three, olive complexion, dark hair and eyes, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-five, in a good position, and fond of home.

ALEXANDER, twenty-seven, rather tall, brown hair, dark-blue eyes, of a cheerful and loving disposition. Respondent must be fair, affectionate, domesticated, and fond of music.

DOLLY E., twenty, fair complexion, hazel eyes, auburn hair, considered pretty, and is well educated. Respondent must be good looking, of a dark complexion, and affectionate.

ADELAIDE, eighteen, fair complexion, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

LIDDELL, seventeen, short, blue eyes, brown hair, and is considered pretty. Respondent must be medium height, light hair, fond of music, loving, and a gentleman both in manner and in social position.

ROCKING ARTHUR, twenty-three, 6ft. 3in., handsome, light hair, and a lieutenant in the Royal Navy. Respondent must be tall, dark, fond of children, well educated, and musical.

LONELY NELLIE, seventeen, rather tall, fair, domesticated, very loving, and pretty, desires to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-one, good looking, affectionate, tall, and rather dark.

AGUSTIA, eighteen, blue eyes, auburn hair, considered pretty, and well educated. Respondent must be about twenty-three, fair, of an amiable disposition, and fond of home.

FLYING TOM, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty, fair complexion, wishes to correspond with a young lady about the same age, who must be good looking, and domesticated; a native of London preferred.

GODFRED, nineteen, light hair and eyes, affectionate, possessing a good income, and fond of children. Respondent must be pretty, domesticated, and good tempered.

LANNETTE, nineteen, medium height, fair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be about twenty-one, tall, fair complexion, light hair, of an even temper, and must occupy a good position; an officer in the Navy preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

FRED G. is responded to by—"Loving Bell," twenty-four, medium height, dark, with blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and thinks she would suit him admirably.

FAUCILLA by—"Arthur," nineteen, light-brown hair, blue eyes, good looking, in receipt of a good salary, and will have a little money when of age.

JOE E by—"M. E. F.," seventeen, tall, fair, and thinks she will suit him.

NELLY C. by—"James W.," tall, dark, fond of home, and in a good position.

JUNO by—"C. J.," twenty, good looking, well educated, and with fair prospects.

SARAH by—"W. W.," twenty-one, dark-brown hair, hazel eyes, loving, and fond of home.

SOPHIE I. by—"Claude," dark complexion, considered good looking, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

RALPH by—"Rosetta," who thinks she is all that he requires, and she possesses an annual income of 20l.

JAMES M. by—"Galatea," twenty-one, a blonde, pretty, domesticated, and with pecuniary expectations.

ALBERT by—"Katie," twenty-two, tall, dark, accomplished, domesticated, and will receive 100l. a year on the death of a relative.

HARRIET B. by—"Gern," twenty-two, a first-class mechanic, with a little money of his own, and has expectations.

LOUIS T. by—"E. L.," twenty-one, above the medium height, brown eyes, dark hair, domesticated, and is of a cheerful disposition.

FRANK by—"A. M. R.," twenty-two, medium height, fair complexion, hazel eyes, domesticated, and of a cheerful disposition.

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